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Set-up to Succeed: Examining Parental and Peer Influences on Black Adolescents' Achievement Related Outcomes

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Set-up to Succeed: Examining Parental and Peer Influences on Black Adolescents' Achievement Related Outcomes

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my little sister. You are my strength, energy and inspiration. Everything that I have accomplished or aspire to accomplish was with you in mind. I pray that you use my failures and successes and get inspired by both. May your future accomplishments in life outshine my own.

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To my mother who I know is going to read this document from cover to cover, thank you for being my inspiration. You always told me I could do whatever I set my mind to (except singing), and I attribute any success that I attain in life to those seeds that you planted a long time ago. To my friends and family, you have all likely endured my long and passionate rants, endless tears, and have rejoiced in my victories sometimes more than I have celebrated. Thank you all for keeping me grounded. To Brian, who I know is tired of hearing about my dissertation, we made it! Thank you all for your love and support. You were the perfect partner during this process. Your love during this phase of my life gives me confidence in our future. And lastly, thanks be to God for giving me the strength to finish.

Set-up to Succeed: Examining Parental and Peer Influences on Black Adolescents' Achievement Related Outcomes

by

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According to national education statistics, the achievement gap between Black students and their White and Asian counterparts persists (U.S. Department of Education, 2013a). Scholars have made countless attempts to explain what is causing this perpetual disparity; but unfortunately, many of the theoretical frameworks have been deficit-based and lack in their ability to uncover protective factors. Academic and racial socialization have both been deemed influential in the psychosocial development and academic achievement of Black youth (Allen, 2015; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Suizzo, Robinson, & Pahlke, 2008). The goal of this dissertation was to better understand the influence of academic and racial socialization messages from parents and peers on Black youth's achievement attitudes and subsequent academic achievement. Data collected from approximately 308 adolescents who racially identified as Black were used to test three structural models of academic achievement: a racial socialization model, academic socialization model, and a combined racial and academic model. The findings suggest that both socialization practices from parents and peers influence the academic achievement of Black youth through their impact on achievement attitudes. Implications for practice, interventions, and research are provided.

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Chapter I: Introduction

"Education is a precondition to survival in America today." – Marian Wright Edelman

Few would contest the accuracy of this quote from Marian Wright Edelman, founder of the Children's Defense Fund and activist for disadvantaged youth. Indeed, education in America has always been highlighted as an important commodity. Unfortunately, according to reports on national education statistics, Black students have been identified as a group of young people who have consistently performed below national averages for roughly the past 40 years (Rampey, Dion, & Donahue, 2009; U.S. Department of Education, 2013a). Although there has been a successful reduction in the reading score gap between Black and White students, Black students still lag behind their White counterparts by 31 points in math and 26 points for reading in the 8th grade (U.S. Department of Education, 2013a). Furthermore, despite efforts previously made to close this gap, national trends reveal that an imbalance in educational attainment still exists (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010). As evidence of this attainment gap, between 1990 and 2013, the gap of high school diploma recipients between White and Black students narrowed by 4 points; however, the gap in the percentage of 25- to 29-year olds with a bachelor's degree widened by 7 points (Kena et al., 2014). These statistics of underperformance and decreased attainment point to a lack of academic success and opportunities for Black youth.

Scholars have coined the academic performance comparison of one group of students to another, typically divided by racial classification, as the *achievement gap*. Differential achievement between racial groups is traditionally the way in which group achievement trends are examined, and despite scholars' cautioning against making these comparisons (e.g., Hilliard, 2003), the method persists. National education statistics are typically stratified by race to demonstrate who *are* and *are*

not meeting the standards; and, most of these group comparisons are made using the majority race as the reference group. For example, in America, the achievement gap statistics operate from a White standard and all other groups are either under- or over-performing in comparison. The two main groups that are frequently characterized as the underperformers are Black and Latino/a youth.

National statistics on Black and Latino/a youth's academic performance show substantial areas for improvements. For example, in 2012, the high school dropout rates for Black and Latino students, exceeded the overall dropout rate for the adolescent population by 1% for Black youth and almost 6% for Latino/a youth (U.S. Department of Education, 2013b). These statistics parallel similar trends found in the standardized tests scores, academic coursework selection, and educational attainment of Black and Latino/a youth. All in all, Black and Latino/a students score lower on college entrance exams, have lower standardized math and reading scores, and enroll in less rigorous high school courses than do White students (Chapman, Laird, Ifill, & KewalRamani, 2011).

It is important to note that although both Black and Latino/a youth are vulnerable to the same daunting education statistics, it has been suggested that the challenges facing Black youth are unique and require undivided attention (Cabrera, Coll, Martinez-Beck, & McLoyd, 2013; Spencer & Swanson, 2013). Ramirez and Carpenter (2005) found that after controlling for socioeconomic status and participation in English Second Language programs, Latino/a and White youth achievement trends were nearly identical, and that shifts in each group's achievement were similarly affected by the same factors (e.g., time spent on homework). Black students' achievement trends, on the other hand, were still significantly different from White students' trend lines, thus revealing that the achievement differences between White and Black students is more than just a language or socioeconomic gap (Ramirez & Carpenter, 2005). This finding provides further support for the need of a deeper investigation of the achievement-related outcomes of Black youth. Therefore, the goal of this

dissertation study is to examine the roles of academic and racial socialization from parents and peers, and achievement attitudes in the academic achievement outcomes of Black youth. Findings will help get a better understanding of intervention strategies that may be used to promote increases in Black youth achievement.

Background

The historic *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling brought promises of educational equality and hopes of alleviating the disparities in education between White and Black students. However, the goal of equality does not consider societal inequities and the need for differentiated support for certain groups, but rather utilizes universal approaches to resolve issues which disproportionately impacts certain groups. To date, complete parity in education has not been achieved, and former thoughts of school integration being the solution to educational disparities have been called to question (Spencer & Swanson, 2013). Efforts to alleviate inequitable academic and social outcomes for Black youth, also include an evaluation of the lack of achievement and educational attainment that Black youth are experiencing, as compared to some other-race youth. Academic achievement and educational attainment are linked to better social outcomes later in life. Both are associated with higher earnings and lower unemployment rates over a lifetime (Ryan & Siebens, 2012), decreased involvement in criminal offending during adulthood (Ford & Schroeder, 2011), and healthy behavior changes in middle adulthood (Margolis, 2013). Additionally, it has been found that students who do well academically in primary and secondary education have a higher probability of enrolling and completing post-secondary education (Hoffman, 2002). In turn, successful completion of postsecondary degrees are linked to higher earnings later in life (Carnevale, Rose, & Cheah, 2011). Given these positive outcomes of attainment and achievement, issues of achievement differences

between racial groups (Aud et al., 2010) and increased high school dropout rates for Black youth (Chapman et al., 2011) may be limiting their access to short- and long-term well-being.

The impact of underperformance extends beyond social disadvantages, but has implications for the nation's economy and ability to compete on a global level. President Obama's *Educate to Innovate* campaign helped make science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education and career opportunities a national priority (see President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology, 2012). Advances in STEM are important in ensuring that America is keeping up with other countries, which is vital for our economy. Research shows that individual success in STEM-related areas is largely contingent on K-8 academic achievement in science and math courses (Traphagen, 2011). It has also been speculated that increased racial/ethnic diversity of STEM professionals brings about new innovations, better problem-solving strategies, and increases overall field growth (Ferrini-Mundy, 2013; Hong & Page, 2004; Tabak & Collins, 2011). However, given the current achievement trends, Black students will continue to be underrepresented in STEM areas, thus impacting the nation's ability to compete with other industrialized countries (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010; Thomasian, 2011). Additionally, as mentioned, educational attainment is linked to higher wages later in life. Therefore, educational attainment will ultimately aide in the development of a better national economy. Overall, both educational achievement and attainment are markers of success and lead to better outcomes for both the individual and society.

There is a complex relationship between student academic achievement, school dropout risk, and entry into the juvenile and criminal justice system (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010), which further exacerbates discrepancies in educational attainment. The 2014 report by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (2014) revealed that suspension rates for Black youth exceeded their overall enrollment in U.S. public schools by twofold in the 2011-2012 academic year. Relatedly,

because most teachers and schools rely primarily on classroom removal as the solution to problematic behavior management (Arcia, 2006), many students who are disciplined in the school are also found to have lower academic success (Gregory et al., 2010). This process of using punitive discipline as a vehicle to push students out of school has been coined the *school-to-prison pipeline,* due to the likelihood that students subject to exclusionary discipline will have contact with the criminal justice system (Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2010). And, with Black youth being among the lowest academically performing racial groups, having the highest probability of dropping out of high school, and being the most adversely impacted group for disciplinary practices within schools (Aud et al., 2010; Aud, KewalRamani, & Frohlich, 2011; Kena et al., 2014), Black youth seem to be at the losing end of this metaphorical battle. These problems of underachievement, lack of educational attainment, and subsequent restricted access to financial and social success, have received notable attention in both the media and literature (Gillborn, 2008), and collectively paints a picture of bleak outcomes for the future success of minority youth, and Black youth in particular.

Although hindrances to educational equity are well-known, little progress has been made in creating successful solutions (Li & Wang, 2014). Efforts towards resolving academic disparities for Black youth should be a prioritized goal of the nation. Many scholars have theorized potential causes of the achievement gap between Black students and their White counterparts (Fryer & Levitt, 2004; Norman, Ault, Bentz, & Meskimen, 2001; Worrell, 2014); however, majority of the previous research has been comparative and deficit-based, with a focus on risks rather than resilience (Blake, Smith, & Darensbourg, 2016; Spencer & Swanson, 2013). Additionally, even when researchers attempt to move away from comparative research designs, they often include Black and Latino/a groups together, limiting the inclusion of cultural variables unique to each group that may help explain achievement trends (Cabrera et al., 2013). To this end, research has largely neglected the positive, and protective

role that culture and social supports (i.e., parent and peers) may have in promoting the academic achievement of Black youth (Spencer, 1995; Spencer, Dupree, & Hartmann, 1997).

Within-Group Achievement Discrepancies

Limited research about achievement differences among Black youth is available. As mentioned previously, research has primarily focused on differences between various racial groups rather than differences within groups. Ethnic minority research scholars have mentioned of the risks of comparative research designs and have cautioned the field of its misuses (Cokley & Awad, 2013). Not only does research comparing racial groups cause one group to be deficient, it also limits the availability of useful information. It is important to understand specific nuances and achievement trends within the racial group (Graham, 1991; Spencer & Swanson, 2013). By researching Black youth in isolation, unique findings emerge, most notably differences based on gender. When achievement outcomes of Black youth are compared across gender groups, girls have more favorable outcomes. Overall, Black female youth achieve higher grades, perform better on standardized tests, and eventually go on to attain more education (McDaniel, DiPrete, Buchmann, & Shwed, 2011; Mickelson & Greene, 2006). Although gender differences will not be explored in this current study, it is important to know how correlates of achievement differ based on gender. Because of the negative relationship between disciplinary referrals and academic achievement that is well-documented, within-group differences on discipline, discrimination and coping strategies follow.

Similar to how stressors and coping strategies may differ based on racial group membership, experiences within Black youth vary also. The strict, punitive disciplinary approaches used in school are a particular stressor facing Black youth, and it has been found that these experiences interfere with healthy development, achievement, and may lead to maladaptive coping (Morrison et al., 2001). Black males experiences the most disciplinary sanctions of all racial and gender groups ranging from 16 to

two times the amount given to White and Black females, respectively (Gregory, 1997). This puts Black boys at risk of academic failure and eventual incarceration (Gregory et al., 2010; Gregory, 1997). However, although Black females have received less attention in the school discipline literature (Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2008), their outcomes can be equally as daunting as their male counterparts and significantly differs from other female students (Blake, Butler, Lewis, & Darensbourg, 2011). From elementary school and onwards, Black girls receive more disciplinary referrals, higher in-school suspension rates, and more infractions for defiance and disruptive behavior than their White and Latino counterparts (Jackson, Hatcher, & Jones, 2015; Mendez, Knoff, & Ferron, 2002; Putallaz et al., 2007; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003).

To further exacerbate disciplinary differences, research has found that Black youth begin to perceive discriminatory events at an earlier age than other racial groups (Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Simons et al., 2002). Experiences of racism and discrimination have been linked to negative physiological and psychological outcomes (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003). A recent longitudinal study of the effects of racial discrimination among Black 7^{th}-10^{th} graders found that racial discrimination was positively associated with depressive symptoms 1 year later across all waves of the study (English, Lambert, & Ialongo, 2014). Furthermore, the findings for male and female participants differed, in that, the relationship between discrimination and depressive symptoms were stronger for females. However, strategies used to cope with these stressors of discrimination differ among Black male and female youth. Research has found that in comparison to Black female youth, Black males exhibit more externalizing behaviors in response to discrimination and are less likely to seek help with coping from adults (Scott & House, 2005). These differences point to differential risks for Black male and female youth which merits more research on areas of resilience.

In attempts to avoid engaging in comparative research, and to include culture-specific factors, this dissertation will focus solely on the Black youth experience. Black is used in this dissertation to refer to students who self-identify as Black, but may represent various ethnicities within the African diaspora (e.g., Afro-Latina, African American, Afro-Caribbean, etc.). Given that there are findings in the literature of higher educational attainment for certain Black ethnic groups (i.e., Caribbean and African immigrants; Rong & Brown, 2001, 2007), differences in study variables between ethnic groups will be tested, and if necessary, controlled. The goal of my dissertation is to investigate the academic and racial socialization practices of parents and peers, and how they influence the achievement attitudes and eventual academic success of Black youth.

Causes of the Achievement Gap

A wealth of literature exists regarding the causes of the achievement differences between different racial groups. According to research, Black children score roughly one standard deviation below White students on standardized reading and math tests before formal education begins (Fryer & Levitt, 2004). This gap continues to increase about 1/10th of a standard deviation each following year of school. What could cause this gap that starts so early and persists throughout many developmental changes? That question has yet to be definitively answered; however, speculation abounds. Scholars have come to agree that there are likely *many* factors that contribute to racial differences in achievement. Some argue that the achievement gap is merely a byproduct of an *opportunity gap* (Da Silva, Huguley, Kakli, & Rao, 2007). This is defined as an unequal distribution of resources and opportunities that limits the student's access to academic success. Opportunity gap research typically focuses on factors such as differences in parent income and education, minority status and increased experiences of bias and discrimination, as well as school-level factors such as exposure to violence and less-qualified teachers (Akiba, 2004; Ascher & Fruchter, 2001). There is no denying that these

factors all impact achievement outcomes, however, the extent of their influence remains to be determined.

One particular component of the opportunity gap hypothesis that seems to get the most attention is poverty and its role in achievement differences between Black and White youth. While Black people represent 13% of the national population, in 2009, Black youth represented 31% of the total population of youth living in poverty (Aud et al., 2011). This percentage is the highest of all other racial groups. Some scholars argue that the achievement gap can be largely resolved by closing the wealth gap that exists between White and Black adults (Orr, 2003). Others believe that although poverty plays an important role in achievement differences, discrepancies still exist when differences in school finances and family resources are controlled (Duncan & Magnuson, 2005).

Although poverty and limited access to educational resources (e.g., tutoring and enrichment camps) are indeed barriers to academic success, exploration of the role poverty plays in academic outcomes of Black youth are not of primary interest in this study. While poverty status is an important factor, resolving the wealth gap requires resources beyond my capacity and often involves legislative action. One of the goals of this dissertation is to identify areas that are amenable to change, so that practical interventions to enhance the academic achievement of Black youth can be developed. Thus, variables indicating low-income status will be controlled for in analyses in the current study in attempts to not blur the effects on other variables included in the study on academic achievement.

Parents have substantial influence on the academic outcomes of their children (Hara & Burke, 1998; Hill & Craft, 2003). Parenting style is one of the most frequently cited ways in which parents have an influence on their child's overall success. Parenting styles are four categories based on dimensions of parental discipline, warmth, communication styles, and a need for control (Baumrind, 1967, 1971). It has been found that different parenting styles are related to various youth psychosocial

outcomes (Bartle, Anderson, & Sabatelli, 1989; Baumrind, 1991; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Paulson, 1994). Two particular parenting styles, authoritative and authoritarian, have frequently been used in the literature. The authoritative parenting style includes strict and consistent parenting approaches, and involve persuading and explaining rules and punishments to the child; whereas, authoritarian styles involve the demand of obedience to authority figures and strict adherence to rules set by the parent. Research on the authoritative parenting style has found it to be associated with higher levels of academic achievement, competence, self-esteem, social development, and mental health in comparison to those raised in authoritarian households (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Alternatively, the authoritarian parenting style, one commonly used in Black families, has been purported to be inadequate in promoting prosocial and pro-school child outcomes (Baumrind, 1991; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Conger, 1991). Due to the focus on parenting styles, as opposed to parental involvement or socialization, research has created a belief that Black parenting practices are negative and promote maladaptive outcomes for their children. Research on the negative influence of Black parenting is widespread, and, despite findings that authoritarian parenting is beneficial for some Black youth (Deater-Deakard, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 1996; Hale-Benson, 1986), some claims of poor parenting practices of Black parents persist today.

Parental involvement is another focus of research on parent-related influences on child outcomes. It has been found that increases in parental involvement in education, such as assisting students in completing their homework and attending school meetings and events, are associated with higher levels of academic success for students (Fehrmann, Keith, & Reimers, 1987; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Keith et al., 1996). Two major correlates of parental involvement are parent socioeconomic status (SES) and family composition. Typically, parents who are low SES or are single parents are less able to be physically involved in school-related activities (Herman & Yeh, 1983; Jeynes, 2001).

Support for the mediating role of parental involvement on the negative effects of poverty on achievement exists (De Civita, Pagani, Vitaro, & Tremblay, 2004; Eamon, 2002; Schreiber, 2002); however, differences in *types* of parental involvement across racial/ethnic groups persist (Lee & Bowen, 2006). Furthermore, because Black youth are more likely to be of low SES or live in single-parent households (US Census Bureau, 2014a, 2014b), research on parental involvement for this population should consider non-physical forms of involvement, such as discussing career aspirations and encouraging effort in school assignments. Unfortunately, limited research has done so and it has been suggested that findings of parental involvement in education for Black youth are missing important pieces of the puzzle and oversimplifying Black parental educational involvement (Taylor & Roberts, 1995). Considering research on parenting styles and parental involvement, the field has focused mostly on the *negative* aspects of parental influences for Black youth. To this end, this study will focus on potentially positive contributions of parents in their child's academic outcomes, and will investigate both physical and non-physical aspects of parental influence on achievement.

Scholars have also investigated the role that peer relationships have on youth academic outcomes. In general, positive peer groups are related to increased school engagement and academic achievement (Kindermann, 2007). However, when focusing on Black youth, claims have been made that Black youth are peer pressured into not valuing education (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986), seek friendships with peers that are less school-oriented (Graham, Taylor, & Hudley, 1998), and must deemphasize their academic success to maintain same-race peer relationships (Ford, 1996). Although these findings have been scrutinized and their generalizations have been dismissed by researchers (e.g., Cokley, 2013; Spencer, Noll, Stoltzfus, & Harpalani, 2001), there has been little empirical research on Black peer relationships to counter these claims. Given the deficit nature in which parent *and* peer relationships for Black youth have been characterized, as well as the limited and inconsistent

research findings of positive social influences on academic outcomes for Black youth, it is important that these relationships be explored further. My dissertation study includes both parent and peer factors to examine whether they influence Black adolescents' achievement-related outcomes.

As evidenced through the information presented thus far, Black adolescents have unique and quite complex experiences, all of which impacts their academic success and attainment. To account for these complexities, it is important to take a more comprehensive look at their experiences and how it may shape achievement. The following section will provide evidence for the need of a more in-depth look at Black youth achievement, as well as an account of successful and relevant theoretical frameworks and research findings. This dissertation will add to the limited collection of research that takes a strengths-based approach to investigate the relationships between Black adolescents, the support of their friends and family, and their achievement attitudes and success. To this end, a discussion of two major theoretical frameworks deemed effective in conceptualizing Black youth outcomes follows.

Theoretical Frameworks for Current Study

The Phenomenological Variant of Ecological Systems Theory (PVEST; Spencer, 1995; Spencer et al., 1997) and the Expectancy-Value Theory of Academic Motivation (EVT; Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995) lay the foundation of the current study. Three different conceptual models will be tested in this study: one that focuses on parent and peer *racial* socialization practices and their impact on Black youth achievement, another which highlights parent and peer *academic* socialization, and the final model contains both academic and racial socialization practices from peers and parents. PVEST is used to explain the strengths-based approach this study takes to understand some of the existing relationships, and the inclusion of culture-specific variables and social influences (i.e., peers and parents). EVT is the framework that was most integral in creating the

academic socialization model of achievement and the inclusion of motivational factors in achievement outcomes for all three models. A general conceptual model that each specific model was based on can

Figure 1. General Conceptual Model of Achievement

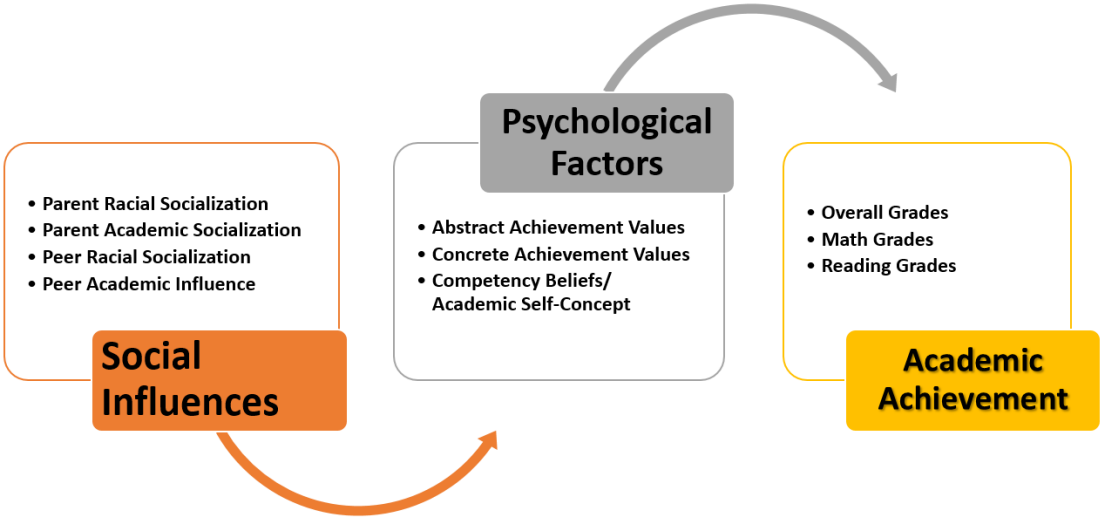

Figure 1. General Conceptual Model of Academic achievement, largely based on Expectancy-Value Theory of Academic Motivation (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Each structural model to be tested in this study follows this overall order of variables.

be found in Figure 1. As demonstrated by the model, social influences are hypothesized to influence motivational factors, which in turn influence achievement. Overviews of both theoretical frameworks follow, as it is beneficial to understand the guided theory before providing an in-depth review of the specific variables included in the study.

PVEST. Motivated by the focus on risks and deficits in ethnic minority youth research, Margaret Beale Spencer formulated the Phenomenological Variants of Ecological Systems Theory (Spencer, 1995; Spencer et al., 1997). Even research that sought to understand resiliency in ethnic minority youth failed to consider normal development and the increasingly complex and stressful changes that occur during adolescence (Swanson, Spencer, Dell'Angelo, Harpalani, & Spencer, 2002). As a result, research seemed to communicate (often times unintentionally) that only certain groups in

the nation are vulnerable. People of color were (and still are) depicted as having exorbitant levels of risks and hardships both in the media and in the literature (Spencer & Swanson, 2013), while information on the vulnerabilities and challenges experienced by White students are left unacknowledged. Furthermore, strengths and protective factors that may help overcome hardships were overshadowed in ethnic minority research, while these topics were plentiful in research on White youth (Cabrera et al., 2013). Building on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory, Spencer (1995, 1997) developed PVEST, a systems theory that focuses on the process of identity formation in ethnic minority youth amidst normal developmental stages. PVEST can be thought of as a framework that looks that the intersection of normal development, culture, and ecology and how those interact and shape ethnic minority youth's identity formation and current and future decision-making.

The cornerstone of PVEST is the idea of universal human vulnerability and opportunities for resilience. Spencer argues that everyone, irrespective of racial group membership, has a set of risks and supports (Spencer, 1995; Spencer et al., 1997; Spencer & Swanson, 2013). Each stage encountered in life presents new and possibly more pressing challenges as a result of typical development (e.g., puberty) or external stressors (e.g., unexpected life event, discrimination). However, the availability of supports that help overcome these challenges may mitigate the negative impact of those events (Neblett, Rivas-Drake, & Umana-Taylor, 2012). For example, even the brightest, most academically engaged and well-adjusted student may encounter a random, unforeseen event (e.g., traumatic brain injury) that may threaten their ability to perform well. However, if that student has supportive teachers, peers and family, as well as the resources necessary to get treatment for the brain injury, the student is more easily able to get back on track. Whereas if that same student had limited access to those resources they may engage in maladaptive coping. This consideration and inclusion of supports

amid challenges is largely under-researched for Black youth (Cabrera, Beeghly, & Eisenberg, 2012; Cabrera et al., 2013; McLoyd, 2006), and information presented previously in this proposal has shown that some of those supports (e.g., parents and peers) have been scrutinized as being insufficient for Black youth.

PVEST fits into the category of culturally-informed theories that are deemed necessary to include when completing research on ethnic minority youth (Knight & Carlo, 2012; Weisner, 2002). It explores protective factors, a combination of resources and supports useful in promoting resilience, by looking at different coping processes that have resulted in positive life course outcomes for diverse youth. Cultural strengths (e.g., spirituality, socialization, and traditions) are considered common protective factors for some ethnic minority youth (Cabrera et al., 2013; Neblett et al., 2012; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014), and have been found to help overcome normal and race/ethnicity-specific challenges (Neblett et al., 2012).

As an example, racial socialization, the teaching of racial pride to navigate experiences of discrimination, may be considered a cultural support for Black youth (Boykin & Toms, 1985; Spencer, 1983). Research has shown that racial socialization: moderates the relationship between violence exposure and later violent behaviors in Black males (DeGruy, Kjellstrand, Briggs, & Brennan, 2012), increases overall adaptive functioning in under-resourced Black youth (Elmore & Gaylord-Harden, 2013), and explains optimism and lower levels of depression in Black children (Liu & Lau, 2013). Unfortunately, cultural variables like racial socialization are less emphasized, and have historically been underrepresented in some of the most prominent research journals (Graham, 1992). To this end, more research and emphasis must be given to individual and cultural strengths for Black youth in efforts to take a more strengths-based research agenda.

In the current study, the selection of variables included were PVEST-inspired. Using a PVEST approach to understanding Black youth should include an array of contextual, cultural, and developmentally-appropriate variables (Spencer et al., 1997). To this end, all models (i.e., racial, academic and combined) of Black youth achievement developed in this study include parent and peer variables of influence to understand some of the adolescent's information they receive from their environment. Also, since individual perception is hallmark in PVEST, both models include an achievement attitudes variable to understand individual processes. Attention to culture is embedded in both the overall research design and the racial model of achievement. By focusing on Black youth alone, the study may lead to more information on differences and commonalities *within* the Black youth experience. The racial model includes parent and peer racial socialization practices as they relate to achievement outcomes. As mentioned previously, racial socialization is a revered as a cultural strength for Black youth; however, inadequate amounts of research have explored its nuances (Bentley, Adams, & Stevenson, 2009; Bentley-Edwards & Stevenson, 2013). Additionally, little is known about racial socialization messages received from friends.

EVT. Jacquelynne Eccles' Expectancy Value Theory of Academic Motivation (EVT) is the other framework used in this study (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). The EVT is a conceptual framework that relates children's expectations and values of academic success to achievement-related outcomes. According to EVT, a student's persistence to complete tasks, interest in succeeding academically, and academic achievement can be predicted by their expectation for success and the value they place on performing well. Expectations in this framework are defined as beliefs that short or long-term future success is contingent on their current success on tasks. It is believed that these expectations have a direct impact on the amount of effort that the child will put into completing tasks, which will ultimately impact their success. For example, a student that expects to do

well on a math test will most likely study more for the test which will subsequently result in good test performance.

An important component of EVT is the presence of competency beliefs. It is suggested that if students believe they can perform well, they build expectations of success. Competency beliefs are analogous to academic self-concept, and education specific self-esteem. This is a particularly interesting concept when studied in Black youth populations, as research tends to find that despite high levels of academic self-concept/competency beliefs, those beliefs hold varying levels of predictive utility for academic achievement outcomes (Cokley, 2000, 2002; Graham, 1997; Steele, 1992). Some attribute these differences to a lack of valuing education (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986) or a misunderstanding of the relationship between effort and outcomes (Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992); however, minimal empirical evidence exists to support either of these explanations. Therefore, additional research on academic competency beliefs is warranted.

Achievement value is the other important component of the EVT model and are usually referred to as subjective task values. These are defined as the motivating beliefs that a student has about completing a task. There are four different types of subjective task values (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995): intrinsic values, attainment values, utility values, and costs. Attainment and intrinsic values are closely related and refer to the importance that completing the task has to the individual and the interest the student has in engaging in the task, respectively. Utility is the almost tangible benefits there are to completing the task. For example, will completing this task help me get a better grade may be a question that utility value answers. And finally, cost refers to the amount of resources that successful completion of the task requires. These costs could be that completing the task takes away from more desired activities. Researchers have found varying levels of utility in using all four versus individual types of subjective task values to predict achievement (Darensbourg & Blake, 2013;

Mickelson, 1990). Therefore, it is most important to understand subjective task values as a larger concept, rather than by its subcomponents.

Significance of Current Study

Deficit-based models of understanding Black youth's achievement have permeated through the field since the onset of the racial achievement gap (McLoyd, 1990). The deficit model is defined as one that places the blame of problems within the victim, their family, and their community (Cabrera et al., 2012; Cabrera et al., 2013). Research that focuses on deficiencies may ignore factors of discrimination, racism, and overall injustices that are inherent to many of the institutions in which we operate. The implications of deficit-based models is that these systems are absolved of all blame; thus, the onus is placed on the individual or community to change rather than acknowledging the reciprocal role that individuals and systems have in shaping the current problems (McLoyd, 1990; Nobles, 1986). This focus on deficits becomes even more disheartening when considering research on Black youth.

This research study will challenge existing assumptions of Black youth's devaluing of education (Graham et al., 1998; Taylor & Graham, 2007) being the cause of their academic underachievement, and hopes to add to the limited, but existing, literature on the achievement attitudes and academic success of Black youth. A considerable amount of attention has been placed on Black youth's academic *failure* (Slaughter-Defoe, Nakagawa, Takanishi, & Johnson, 1990). Additionally, possibly due to the deficient model in which problems were identified, some interventions for improving academic outcomes for Black youth have failed to include cultural and familial strengths, and have been unsuccessful (For critiques of failed interventions and successful ones see Nobles, 1986; Slaughter-Defoe, 1991; Tedla, 1995). Therefore, I will take a strengths-based approach to conceptualizing the achievement attitudes and subsequent academic achievement of Black adolescents. This approach will occur by investigating the influence of race and education-related messages that

existing social supports (i.e., parents and peers) have on Black youth developing their achievement values. By exploring the potentially additive role race plays in academic achievement, this study may help redefine the benefits of cultural values and debunk previous research that posits that Black culture works in opposition of academic success (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1981; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998). Also, exploring parent and peers' role in academic outcomes may help provide interventions to help promote academic achievement for Black youth.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation proposal proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature on Black youth academic achievement. First, an overview and critical discussion of three well-cited theoretical frameworks is presented, followed by a thorough analysis of existing research on parental and peer influences and academic and racial socialization. The research goals, questions and hypotheses of the current study are presented at the conclusion of Chapter 2. The first section of Chapter 3 focuses on the methods that will be used to recruit participants and collect the data, including a presentation of the measures used in the study. Then, in the next section of Chapter 3, the statistical analysis approach is introduced along with specific tests for each research hypothesis. Chapter 3 ends with a brief discussion of the potential limitations of the current study.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

It is important to highlight the literature that exists, and conversely, that does not exist about specific variables related to Black youth academic achievement. The following review of literature begins with an account of parental influence on youth outcomes. The constructs of academic and racial socialization are presented next to explain these two key types of influences that are often beneficial in adolescent development. Following, a more in-depth review of research on academic and racial socialization, as well as parent and peer sources of those messages are presented. Lastly, a summary of the literature and a presentation of the research questions for the current study are provided.

Parental Influence

Adolescence may be one of the most tumultuous developmental stages we transition through. One major supportive relationship that, for most youth, is available throughout these life changes is their relationship with their parents. Although each stage across the lifespan has its own set of essential changes and challenges to overcome, adolescence is a uniquely vulnerable time possibly due to a heightened need to define oneself (Spencer & Swanson, 2013). Normal changes throughout adolescence include puberty, identity development, increased emotions and unstable peer relationships (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Gottman & Mettetal, 1986). The importance of parents and their involvement in their child's development across the lifespan is well-documented (Steinberg, 2001), and research has found parents to have the most influence on their child's long-term decision making (Wang, Peterson, & Morphey, 2007). Despite the typical parent-child conflict that peaks during early and middle adolescence (Steinberg, 1990, 2001), parents still serve an important role in adolescent's

academic development (Eccles & Midgley, 1989). Specifically, parents have significant influence on adolescent attitudes and behaviors related to school (Benner & Mistry, 2007; Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Although there is no question that parents place high value on their child's education (Stevenson, Chen, & Uttal, 1990; Suizzo et al., 2008), previous research on parenting styles and parental involvement in education have brought the quality of Black parent's influence on their children's success into question (Deater-Deakard et al., 1996). Despite previous conceptualizations of parenting styles being linked to youth adjustment and maladjustment patterns, research has found that parent *influence* is more predictive of achievement than parenting style (Paulson, 1994). A specific type of influence on academic achievement, namely academic socialization, as it's related to Black parents and their child's academic success has recently been investigated (e.g., Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Darensbourg & Blake, 2014; Suizzo, Robinson, & Pahlke, 2008). Additionally, Stevenson (1995) posits that research on parenting styles for Black youth have ignored important dimensions of information shared within Black families, such as spirituality and cultural pride, and that ignoring these messages leads to a narrowed view of parenting approaches (Taylor & Roberts, 1995). This particular sharing of race-related information is termed racial socialization (Boykin & Toms, 1985), and has been linked to prosocial outcomes for Black youth (Neblett et al., 2012). Therefore, this study focuses on these more specific forms of parenting influence by including both academic and racial socialization messages received from parents.

Socialization

The expectations and values of parents have been found to be the most essential element of parent involvement (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Combined together, the transmission of parent values and expectations can be equated to socialization. In general, socialization refers to the way that youth learn values, skills and knowledge essential to their position within a group in society (Bush & Simmons,

1990). There are a variety of socialization messages that can be delivered, as well as a variety of sources of these messages. However research on academic socialization and racial socialization has focused primarily on parents as the primary source of these messages (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997).

Academic socialization. Academic socialization is a multidimensional construct that emphasizes the transmission of values and expectations that teaches someone the importance of school and its' utility in the future (Epstein, Sanders, & Bornstein, 2002). This form of socialization has been found to be associated with youth's internalization of these messages and their development of high academic expectations and motivation (Howard, 2003), as well as increased effort in performing well (Paulson, 1994). It is important to note that academic socialization effects on academic values and subsequent achievement have been found to be influential in the academic socialization of adolescents independent of the influence of their peers (Wang et al., 2007).

When academic socialization is looked at for Black youth only, findings are limited. In comparison to other racial groups, and after controlling for SES, Black parents report the highest educational aspirations for their children (Fan & Chen, 2001). Furthermore, in a national study of kindergarten parents, results showed that Black parents had the highest educational expectations for their children regardless of parent education level (Suizzo & Stapleton, 2007). Additionally, parent academic socialization are more predictive of academic outcomes for Black youth than for White youth (Hill et al., 2004). However, dissenting research reveals that the relationship between academic socialization and academic achievement is weaker for Black youth than all other racial groups (Seyfried & Chung, 2002). Therefore, inconsistent information on academic socialization for Black youth, and in particular Black adolescents, exists.

Based on the qualitative results of Suizzo et al. (2008), middle-class Black parents' socialization practices encompass messages of promoting educational achievement (academic socialization), promoting autonomy while maintaining close family relationships, and teaching children about Black history (racial socialization). Although the qualitative research on academic socialization for Black youth has provided a good starting point for understanding its importance in youth development, it is necessary that more quantitative studies are conducted to increase generalizability of findings. To this end, the current study seeks to understand academic socialization messages as their related to achievement attitudes and academic achievement for Black youth.

Racial socialization. Racial socialization is a unique form of socialization strategies utilized by ethnic minority parents. Given that adolescence is typically marked with heightened exposure to the realities of racism and discrimination for Black youth (McKown, 2004; Quintana, 1998), conversations specific about how to navigate and make sense of these encounters often prove beneficial. Racial socialization is the transmission and teaching of values, perceptions and messages regarding an individual's status as a racial group (Boykin & Toms, 1985), and by definition, is a practice not necessarily carried out in majority group members. Additionally, it has been found that Black parents engage in racial socialization significantly more than other racial groups (Coard & Sellers, 2005). Although racial, cultural, and ethnic socialization are often times used interchangeably in the literature (Bentley et al., 2009), it is important to note that the significant differences in research findings on race-related socialization may be attributed to the variety of ways it has been operationalized. Two primary components of racial socialization are cultural socialization, which can be thought of as a promotion of racial pride, and preparation for bias (Bentley et al., 2009; Hughes et al., 2006). Both forms of racial socialization have been found to serve as protective factors for Black

youth at an early age in regards to academic and psychosocial resilience (Caughy, O'Campo, Randolph, & Nickerson, 2002; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009).

Racial socialization has been found to operate in a variety of ways (Hughes & Johnson, 2001), and although it is revered highly in the ethnic minority literature as being a protective factor, there are still some unclear findings on its impact on academic achievement for Black youth. McBride Murry, Brody, Miller, Yi-fu, and Berkel (2009) looked at cultural socialization and preparation for bias as indicators of a latent parent socialization construct. Their findings demonstrated that both types of socialization messages were linked to academic expectations and an overall anticipation of academic success for Black youth. On the other hand, Friend, Hunter, and Fletcher (2011) looked at both preparation of bias and racial pride together and found that, when combined together, they were not a significant predictor of GPA, and that preparation for bias was a significant predictor of GPA for boys only. These differential findings are consistent throughout the literature. While some have found support for components of racial socialization's positive impact on academic outcomes (McBride Murry et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2006), others have found significant negative relationships between subtypes of racial socialization and academic achievement (Marshall, 1995), and some have even found non-significant findings (Miller & MacIntosh, 1999). Therefore, while it is clear that racial socialization can be helpful for Black youth, more clarity is needed to understand whether a specific type of racial socialization is more important, or is related differently, than the other. Therefore, the current study will use a latent construct of racial socialization to allow for an investigation of the potentially different contributions of racial socialization subtypes.

As recommended by Suizzo et al. (2008), it is important to look at both academic- and racial-specific types of socialization when studying Black youth. Thus far, very few studies have looked at both socialization messages. Cooper and Smalls (2010) looked at the academic adjustment of 144

Black adolescents and the distinct and collective role that academic and cultural socialization played. They found that parent academic socialization was positively linked to academic competence and engagement. Furthermore, they found that education encouragement was a more effective element of academic socialization than academic involvement, which challenges previous beliefs of parental involvement in school-related activities being the most important element of parental influence on academic success. Cooper and Smalls (2010)also found promotion of cultural pride was linked to academic self-esteem and classroom engagement. It is important to note that no direct relationship between both socialization types and GPA were found; all relationships were mediated through academic attitudes and engagement (Cooper & Smalls, 2010). Interestingly, the interaction of both socialization types were significant predictors of academic adjustment for Black adolescents. Another study on the supportive influences in the academic success of a sample of Black college males, qualitative findings revealed that earlier messages of academic expectations and racial socialization, specifically racial pride, racial resilience and racism, were key attributes to their success (Allen, 2015). The current study builds on the limited research on academic- and racial socialization and looks at their direct and indirect relationship to academic achievement through achievement attitudes, and also considers a model with both socialization types included.

Peer Influence

Adolescence is marked as a time where youth pay increased attention to peers potentially due to their emergent identity and the shift in their key influential informants (Bentley-Edwards & Adams, 2013). Erikson (1968), in his theory of distinct psychosocial stages of development, marked adolescence as a time of identity and role confusion where students are actively seeking to define themselves and become autonomous. Similar to this stage, and an extension of Erikson's theory is the ongoing experience of *individuation*. Individuation is the developmental process that involves healthy,

successive and progressive negation of the balance between being connected and being separate in relation to their family (Bartle et al., 1989). Although this process happens across the lifespan, adolescence is when the psychological separateness component of individuation is most important, due to the upcoming demand of being an adult.

This process of defining oneself through separation from the family, may be the cause of the increasing importance that adolescents begin to place on their peer relationships (Coleman, 1961; Hallinan & Williams, 1990). At the beginning of middle school, peers have about twice as much influence on youth's identity and decision-making than their parents (Bates, 2004). This is consistent with findings on peer influence on academic achievement. Kindermann (2007) studied a group of adolescents aged 11 to 13 and assessed whether parental involvement, teacher influence, or peer influence were most predictive of adolescent school-related outcomes. The findings revealed that after controlling for both parent involvement and teacher influence on adolescent achievement related outcomes, peer group engagement and influence was predictive of changes in academic motivation across time. Some research has found that the positive and negative traits and relationships between peers all have an important role in influencing achievement outcomes for youth. Nelson and DeBacker (2008), for example, found that having a friend that does not value academics was related to maladaptive achievement motivation in science during 6^{th}, 7^{th} and 9^{th} grades. When students believe that others in their class are resistant to school norms, the students are more likely to have low motivation for learning; thus, it may impact their overall attitude towards achievement (Nelson & DeBacker, 2008).

The nature of friendships, either positive or negative, may have an effect on the youth academic-related outcomes. Wang and Eccles (2012) found that the prosocial peer relationships among youth were positively related to school compliance, whereas, antisocial peer relationships had a

negative impact on school compliance. Furthermore, positive friendships, those characterized by support and prosocial behaviors, are related to increased involvement in school, while negative friendships, those of drama and conflict, are linked with school disengagement (Berndt & Keefe, 1995; Kurdek & Sinclair, 2000). It has been argued that perhaps selection effects are the source of these findings and that students who perform better academically seek out peers that are also academically successful. However, research has found these relationships between peer relationships and academic outcomes to still be significant even after controlling for peer selection effects (Kindermann, 2007; Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). Thus, regardless of students selecting like-minded and equally achieving peers, the nature of those relationships still impact academic achievement.

Although peer influence on achievement is well known for majority youth, the relationship is mostly unknown for minority students (McKown & Strambler, 2008). Hallinan (1983) conducted a study on a diverse sample of students and found that youth were more likely to attend college if their friends also expected to go to college, after controlling for socioeconomic status. Additionally, she found that the effect significantly increased from 9th grade to 12th, demonstrating that as peer relationships become stronger, they become more influential. Other studies have looked at racial group differences in peer relationships, parenting style, and their differential impact on achievement outcomes. Findings suggest that while Asian students are more likely to have friends who place a great emphasis on academic achievement, Black and Latino friends place the less emphasis on schooling than their White and Asian counterparts (Steinberg, 1996).

Peer relationships may also alter the nature and strength of the association between specific parenting styles and achievement-related outcomes. Steinberg et al. (1992) found qualitative results that peer support offset the negative impact that authoritarian parenting style has on academic achievement for Asian youth, while Black youths' positive relationship between authoritative

parenting style and achievement is undermined by the *absence* of peer support for achievement. Additionally, other findings suggest that the positive impact of peer social support on valuing of learning is stronger for African American students than European American students (Wang & Eccles, 2012). These findings comparing Black youth to other racial groups may reveal that peer influence individually, and as it relates to parental influence, is important to consider when looking at Black youth's achievement.

Unfortunately research on peer influence on achievement for Black students is limited and have mixed findings. Some research has found that Black youth exhibit lower levels of peer pressure (Giordano, Cernkovich, & DeMaris, 1993) and are overall less peer-oriented than other racial groups (di Cindio, Floyd, Wilcox, & McSeveney, 1983). However, others posit that Black youth are more sensitive to negative peer influence (Steinberg et al., 1992) and that Black youth admire peers that do not do well in school (Graham et al., 1998). Kao (2001) conducted a study on peer influence and achievement-related attitudes and behaviors using longitudinal data. Findings suggested that even after controlling for peer selection effects, Black students were more sensitive to friends' school beliefs and behaviors and that there was a positive association between friends' attitudes and participants' educational aspirations. Furthermore, he found that Black peers were no less supportive of educational success than other race peers, discounting the devaluing claims of other researchers (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998). The present study seeks to add to the limited research-base of peer influence on academic achievement. Specifically, I've included variables that assess peer academic socialization on achievement.

Social environments that are sensitive to adolescent's developmental needs are associated with increased achievement motivations, behaviors, and emotions, and environments that are at odds with the developmental needs are associated with a decline in academic achievement and engagement

(Eccles et al., 1993). To this end, it is important that adolescents have social influences that can help them positively adjust to their environment. As noted previously, culture-specific coping mechanisms have been found to be beneficial to Black youth (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Neblett et al., 2012; Nobles, 1986). Considering that peers' academic-related support and influence have been found to play an important role in identity development and academic outcomes, peers' race-related influences should also be considered for Black youth. Unfortunately, very limited research exists on the messages shared between adolescent peers that pertain to race. Considering the important role that culture and racial socialization plays in shaping the identity of Black youth when it comes from parents, it may be beneficial to investigate relationships between peer racial socialization and achievement attitudes and outcomes.

As previously noted, an increased emphasis on peer relationships is hallmark of adolescence and if academic-only messages are being researched for Black youth, the field may be missing an important piece of the puzzle. Consistent with PVEST, it is crucial to consider the different systems, as well as available supports at each developmental stage. Peers are considered a key influence during adolescence; thus, a more inclusive evaluation of their role in the academic achievement of Black youth is warranted. The current study investigates both the academic *and* cultural influence that peers may have on Black youth achievement-related outcomes, and cultural influence will be assessed by using racial socialization messages from peers.

Achievement Attitudes and Academic Outcomes

The use of the term achievement attitudes will be used to account for the different ways in which the literature refers to education-related values and beliefs. Specifically, this study will focus on subjective task values and competency beliefs about achievement. A simplistic way of thinking about achievement attitudes in this study, and consistent with Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT; Eccles &

Wigfield, 1995), is: “I think I can do well” + “I want to do well” = successful outcomes. These values and beliefs that school is important, interesting, and doable lead to increased effort, which in turn, results in positive achievement outcomes (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Although EVT is a very popular theory on academic motivation, research on achievement values and expectations for Black youth is pretty limited. Mickelson (1990) looked at achievement values of White and Black youth and the findings revealed significant group differences in values. After creating two subcategories of subjective task values: concrete and abstract values, previous thoughts on task values and achievement were challenged. According to Mickelson, abstract values refer to universal ideals about how education is the key to success and that more schooling leads to more prosperity. Concrete values, however, are the more realistic views of education. Mickelson posited that concrete values are markedly different for Black youth, who have been exposed to instances where discrimination got in the way of upward mobility despite educational attainment. She posits that Black youth seeing people in their community either (1) being able to maintain a decent living without getting education or (2) having education but lacking gainful employment, resulted in Black youth’s values of education to be different than the oft glamorized view of educational attainment. After comparing the predictive ability of achievement values on academic achievement for Black and White youth, she found that Black youth achievement was only predicted by the concrete attitudes, not the abstract ones (Mickelson, 1990). Because the findings showed that concrete values were most important, researchers on achievement values for Black youth have limited the scope of their investigation to concrete attitudes only, rather than both concrete and abstract. By eliminating discussion of abstract values, achievement values are oversimplified and take on a deficit perspective.

There have been more recent studies of achievement values in Black youth, and yet, consensus on the importance and types of subjective task values still has not been established. Some researchers

have found support for Mickelson's (1990) findings on the non-significant relationship between abstract task values and achievement-related outcomes for Black youth (Darensbourg & Blake, 2013; Meece, Wigfield, & Eccles, 1990; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). However, new information has surfaced and found support of the inclusion of the more pro-school, abstract values (Downey, Ainsworth, & Qian, 2009). A recent study looked at achievement values, behavioral engagement, and subsequent academic achievement and found that combining concrete and abstract values together as a latent construct revealed that achievement values were predictive of behavioral engagement which was in turn predictive of academic achievement (Darensbourg & Blake, 2014). Additionally, Wang and Eccles (2012) revisited subjective task values and social supports for Black and White adolescents and found that Black youth had significantly higher valuing attitudes than White youth. The researchers found that the normative decrease in task valuing that occurs from 7th grade and onwards was reduced by the inclusion of parent, peer and teacher support. Furthermore, the positive impact of peer social support on subjective valuing of learning was stronger for Black students than White students (Wang & Eccles, 2012).

Another type of achievement attitude worth investigating for Black youth's academic outcomes are competence beliefs, or, academic self-concept. For the most part, if a student believes they are competent and can perform well, they are likely to do so (Wigfield et al., 1997). However, some researchers have noted inconsistencies in competence beliefs and academic achievement for Black youth, stating that Black youth are unrealistic and overly optimistic about their achievement abilities since they are not often related to actual achievement (Farkas, Lleras, & Maczuga, 2002; Solorzano, 1991). It can be argued that other processes may interfere with students' ability beliefs mapping onto their achievement (e.g., Stereotype Threat). However, counter-evidence of Black youth's achievement beliefs being inconsistent with their achievement has emerged by way of academic self-concept.

Academic self-concept has been found to be a significant, positive correlate of academic achievement for students, and specifically, Black students (Awad, 2007; Cokley, 2000, 2002; Cokley & Chapman, 2008; Witherspoon, Speight, & Thomas, 1997). Mboya (1986) found that self-concept specific to academic ability, rather than general self-concept, was correlated with academic achievement of Black 10th graders. In a study looking at achievement attitude differences in gifted, potentially gifted, and regular Black students, results indicated that gifted Black students, in comparison to the other two groups, held significantly different attitudes about school, academically successful students, and parent academic socialization (Ford & Harris, 1996). These findings further challenge the idea of achievement attitudes being inconsistent with academic outcomes for Black youth.

More information on achievement attitudes and Black youth achievement outcomes is needed. The current study utilizes abstract task values, concrete task values, and competency beliefs as indicators for a latent construct of achievement attitudes. This will allow an assessment of which values are most influential in academic achievement, as well as a better understanding of ability beliefs in Black youth.

The Present Study

Given the inconsistent findings of previous research, and limited investigations of certain social influences of achievement outcomes for Black youth, the current study examines the distinct and combined effects of racial and academic socialization messages from peers and parents on Black youth's achievement values and subsequent academic outcomes. To address the specific research questions below, three separate conceptual models (See Figures 2, 3 and 4) will be used to test the research questions. The first model combines both academic and racial socialization messages to test for direct effects for both constructs on achievement outcomes. This model is hereafter referred to as the combined model (Figure 2). The next model, referred to as the academic model, focuses on

academic socialization influences from parents and peers (See Figure 3). Finally, the third model, referred to as the racial model, focuses on racial socialization from both parents and peers (Figure 4). To this end, the overarching goal of this study is to test whether the hypothesized structural models of achievement for Black students fit the data.

In addition to the overall model fit, a number of direct and indirect effects will be explored to assess the remaining research questions. Therefore, based on data collected from Black adolescents, the following research questions (RQ) and their hypotheses (H) will be tested. Each hypothesis and research question is accompanied by a detailed rationale (R) of the hypothesized assertion. To supplement these questions, conceptual models are provided consisting of specific, color-coded paths as they relate to the hypotheses.

Preliminary Research Questions

RQ 1. Is there a relationship between academic socialization and academic achievement?

H 1: It is hypothesized that there will be a positive correlation between academic socialization and academic achievement.

R 1: Previous research has found academic socialization to influence academic achievement for all students (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Suizzo, Pahlke, Yarnell, Chen, & Romero, 2014), and for Black students in particular (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Suizzo et al., 2008). Therefore, similar results are hypothesized to be found.

RQ 2. Is there a relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement?

H 2: It is hypothesized that a positive correlation between racial socialization and academic achievement will exist.

R 2: Previous research on racial socialization for Black youth has consistently found that socialization is positively related to positive overall psychosocial development (Caughy et al., 2002; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009) and academic adjustment (McBride Murry et al., 2009). Furthermore, racial socialization is revered among ethnic minority research scholars as an

Figure 2. Conceptual Combined Socialization Model of Academic Achievement

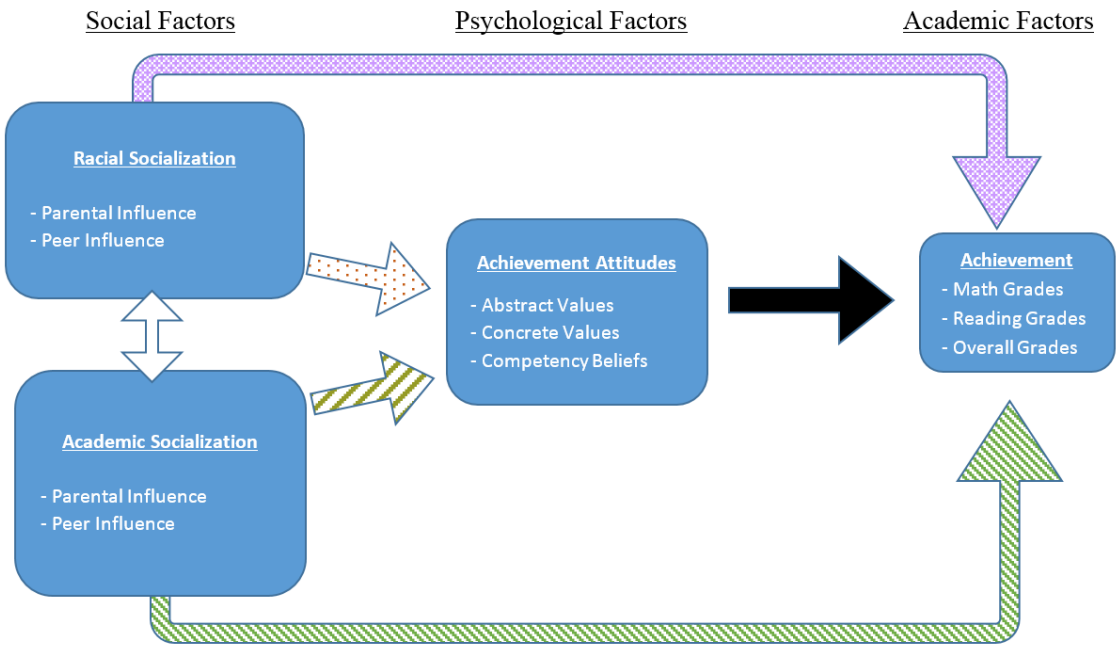

Figure 2. The paths differ by their shading pattern according to whether they are racial socialization (dotted) or academic socialization (striped) paths. More densely patterned paths indicate direct effects of socialization types on achievement. Less densely patterned paths indicate the mediation of achievement attitudes on the relationship between socialization practices and academic achievement.

important cultural practice that aides in youth resilience (Coard & Sellers, 2005; Hughes et al., 2006; Spencer, 1983; Spencer & Swanson, 2013). Therefore, a positive relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement is hypothesized to be found in the current study.

Combined Socialization Model Research Question

RQ 3. Is there a significant difference in the influence of racial or academic socialization on achievement attitudes?

H 3: The academic socialization path to achievement attitudes will significantly differ from the path from racial socialization to achievement attitudes.

R 3: Previous research has suggested that academic socialization has a positive relationship with motivation-related achievement attitudes (Hill & Tyson, 2009). However, research for racial socialization has consistently found *racial identity* to be the mediator of the relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement (Neblett et al., 2012; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). Therefore, although some research suggests that combining both socialization types is beneficial for Black youth (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Suizzo et al., 2008), it can still be

Figure 3. Conceptual Academic Socialization Model of Academic Achievement

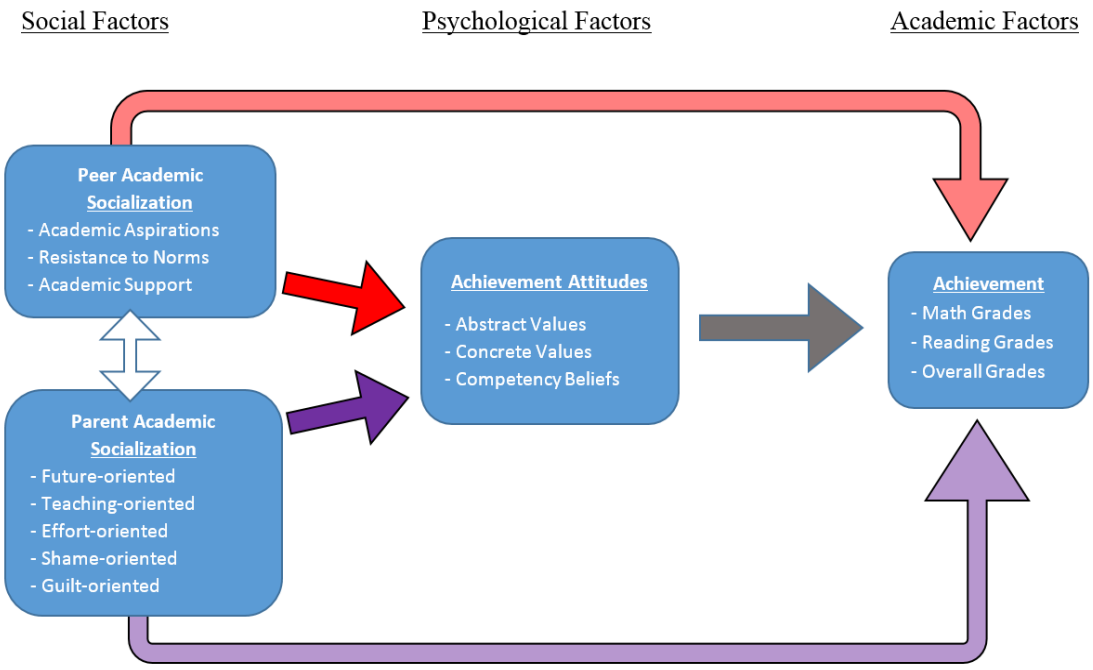

Figure 3. The paths are color coordinated according to whether they are peer (red) or parent (purple) paths. Lighter paths indicate direct effects of parent and peer socialization on achievement. Darker paths indicate paths the mediation of achievement attitudes on the relationship between academic socialization and achievement.

speculated that academic socialization influences achievement attitudes significantly different than racial socialization.

Academic Model Research Questions

RQ 4. Do peer and parent academic socializations have an influence on Black youth's academic achievement?

RQ 4a: ***Does peer academic socialization directly influence academic achievement outcomes?***

H 4a: The path from peer academic socialization to academic achievement will be significantly positive.

R 4a: Previous research has found there to be a significantly positive relationship between peer's educational influence and adolescent academic achievement, mediated through school engagement (Darensbourg & Blake, 2014). Other studies have found similar support for peer influence on academic outcomes (Nelson & DeBacker, 2008); however, less direct effects have been found.

RQ 4b: ***Does parent academic socialization directly influence academic achievement outcomes?***

H 4b: The path from parent academic socialization to academic achievement is hypothesized to be significantly positive. Therefore, an increase in positive parental socialization of education will result in an increase in school grades.

R 4b: Prior research has found parent academic socialization to be related to academic success for Black students (Allen, 2015), and for students in general (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Although little quantitative research on parent academic socialization for Black adolescents is available,

previous research findings (Suizzo et al., 2008; Suizzo & Soon, 2006) and theory (Wang & Eccles, 2012; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) both suggest that there is a significant and positive relationship between parent academic socialization and youth academic achievement.

RQ 5. Do achievement attitudes mediate the relationship between peer and parent academic socialization and academic achievement?

RQ 5a: ***Is the relationship between peer academic socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?***

H 5a: Achievement attitudes will mediate the positive relationship between peer academic socialization and academic achievement.

R 5a: Due to the limited research of peer influences on achievement values and outcomes, the hypothesis for the mediated effect of achievement values on peer influence and academic achievement is based largely on Expectancy-Value Theory (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Additionally, findings suggest that peer support influences academic motivation (Kindermann, 2007) and engagement (Darensbourg & Blake, 2014), so similar findings are anticipated for achievement attitudes as measured in the current study.

RQ 5b: ***Is the relationship between parent academic socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?***

H 5b: Achievement attitudes will mediate the positive relationship between parent academic socialization and academic achievement.

R 5b: Previous research has found that parent academic socialization influences academic outcomes of their children through the child's internalization of the academic expectations

communicated by their parents (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Given that achievement attitudes, as measured in this study, includes constructs similar to academic expectations, a similar relationship is anticipated. Therefore, based on these findings, the indirect effect of parent academic influence on academic achievement through achievement values is anticipated to be significant.

Figure 4. Conceptual Racial Socialization Model of Academic Achievement

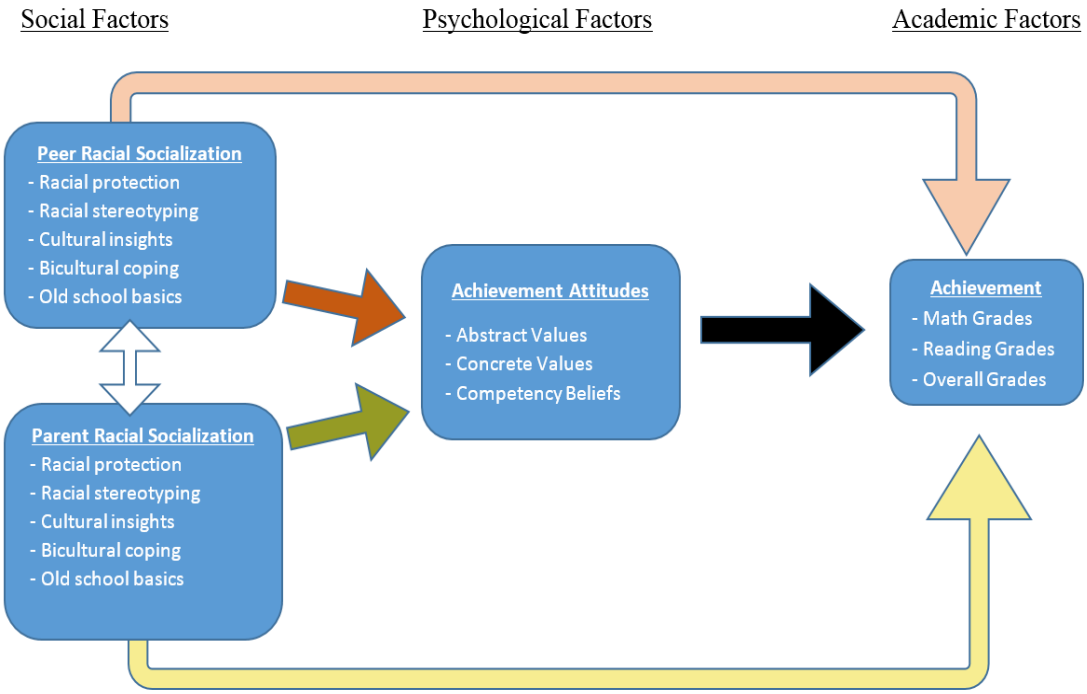

Figure 4. The paths are color coordinated according to whether they are peer (orange) or parent (green) paths. Lighter paths indicate direct effects of parent and peer socialization on achievement. Darker paths indicate paths used to determine the mediation of achievement attitudes on the relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement.

Racial Model Research Questions

RQ 6. Do parent and peer racial socialization have a direct influence on Black youth's academic achievement?

RQ 6a: ***Does peer racial socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement?***

H 6a: There will be a significantly positive relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement.

R 6a: There is extremely limited information on the relationship between racial socialization among peers. Most research and measures have failed to capture the source of those socialization messages (Bentley-Edwards & Stevenson, 2013). However, racial socialization's positive impact on the development of Black youth is well documented when provided by parents (Brown, Tanner-Smith, & Lesane-Brown, 2007; Frabutt, Walker, & MacKinnon-Lewis, 2002; McHale et al., 2006). Additionally, during adolescence, peers become key influencers of adolescent decision-making (Bates, 2004; Bentley-Edwards & Adams, 2013). To this end, similar findings of parent-provided racial socialization's positive influence on academic achievement are anticipated for peer informants.

RQ 6b: ***Does parent racial socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement?***

H 6b: There will be a significantly positive relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement.

R 6b: Racial socialization from parents has been found to be an important cultural practice that leads to both positive psychosocial development (Caughy et al., 2002; Stevenson & Arrington, 2009), and academic adjustment (McBride Murry et al., 2009). Therefore, the current hypothesis of a direct effect is based on these previous findings.

RQ 7. Do achievement attitudes mediate the relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement?

*RQ 7a**: Is the relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?***

H 7a: The relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement will be mediated by achievement attitudes.

R 7a: The direct relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement is based on theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Spencer, 1995; Spencer et al., 1997; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) and not previous empirical findings. Therefore, building on PVEST, it is speculated that peers aide in the psychosocial adjustment for Black youth, particularly during adolescence. Thus, they may play an important and unique role in helping Black youth develop values and expectations about academic success. And, based on Expectancy Value Theory, high expectations and values lead to academic achievement.

*RQ 7b**: Is the relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?***

*H 7b***:** The relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement will be mediated by achievement attitudes.

*R 7b***:** Most studies that have looked at the method through which racial socialization impacts achievement has been through ethnic identity formation (Neblett et al., 2012; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014). Based on the limited information on racial socialization on motivational factors that lead to academic achievement, this hypothesis is largely based on EVT (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) and PVEST (Spencer, 1995) models for Black youth academic success.

Chapter III: Methods

This study examined the distinct and collective influence of parent and peers' academic and racial socialization messages on Black youth's achievement attitudes and subsequent achievement. Data for this study was collected from a variety of collection sources, including a university subject pool, youth from historically Black churches, and active recruitment using a snowball strategy through email listservs.

Study Procedures

Prior to collecting data, the researcher obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval through the University of Texas at Austin, as well as approval from all entities that chose to participate in large data collection efforts. This research study was in full compliance with all standards and procedures outlined by the American Psychological Association and the University of Texas at Austin. As approved by the IRB, parental consent for participants aged 17 years and younger was obtained prior to collecting any data from the youth. Parents provided consent by reviewing a consent form electronically and receiving a survey password that they gave to their child to complete the survey.

A web-based survey and a printable survey packet containing identical questions were both created to increase survey accessibility, which has been found to impact overall participation rate (Greenlaw & Brown-Welty, 2009). The web-based survey was created through an online survey-building and data collection system called *Qualtrics.* Participant consent was obtained from adolescents of all ages prior to them completing the survey (electronic and hardcopy). As approved and recommended by the IRB, any data and consent that was obtained on paper was entered electronically and destroyed to maintain confidentiality. Specific data collection strategies for each collection source is detailed in the following section.

Data collection. Participants were recruited using a variety of sources: snowball data collection, church collection sites, and the university subject pool. As recommended by the IRB, electronic data collection was the preferred method of receiving participant responses. Therefore, whenever possible, participants were encouraged to access the online survey. Snowball data collection involved distributing a survey flyer through email and social media websites. Potential participants were contacted via email through a recruitment handout which contained the direct link to the survey consent form. The consent prompted individuals 18 and over to provide participant consent, then redirected them to the password-protected survey. For children 17 and younger, they were prompted to get parent consent. After the parent granted consent, they were provided a direct link to the password-protected survey, as well as the password for access. Therefore, youth who already had consent from their parents could directly access the survey and password. In all cases, contact information for the researcher was provided in case any questions or concerns arise.

To ensure that there were no confounding variables, students participating in the University of Texas at Austin's Educational Psychology Department's (EDP) subject pool were invited to participant in the current study. Subject pool participants include students who are enrolled in an undergraduate EDP course. These students are given the option to either participate in a number of subject pool research studies, or, to complete a research paper for course credit. Once students decide to participate in the subject pool, they complete a brief demographic questionnaire that helps determine which study in which they will qualify to participate. Students that were assigned to the current research study's subject pool participation were provided the electronic link to the participant consent form, then were redirected to the survey. After providing their full name to demonstrate participation in the study, participants were assigned credit by the researcher.

A hardcopy survey packet was designed for two data collection opportunities at churches. The packet contained a brief description of the survey, the researcher's contact information, and a parental consent form. All questions included in the web-based survey were also included in the printed survey packet. The researcher, along with a team of assistants, attended two church services to collect data from youth. The first church was a large church ("megachurch") in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. After reaching out to the church for assistance, the researcher was invited to collect data during Children's Church- a separate building during regular church services where the youth participate in church-related activities. Announcements were made by church administration to parents attending the regular church services two Sundays prior to the collection event. Parents were also emailed and allowed to withdraw parental consent. Students whose parents withdrew consent were given other work to do while participating students completed the survey packet. A similar process for collection data occurred at a smaller church in Galveston, TX.

Sample

When determining the minimum sample size needed to maintain adequate power, I adhered to the suggestions provided by Keith (2006). Therefore, a power and sample size analysis was conducted using a computer program designed by Preacher and Coffman (2006). Results indicated that a total sample of 147 participants would be needed to detect *model fit* using a Root Mean Square Error of Approximation cutoff value of .05 with 80% power and an alpha value of .05. Furthermore, another sample size estimator indicated that 376 participants would be the minimum sample size needed to detect *small effects* (d= .1) with 85% power based on the number of observed and unobserved variables included in the model. Thus, it was decided that a total sample of 300 participants was realistic to achieve while still preserving overall statistical power.

A total sample of 308 participants between the ages of 13 and 25 who identified as Black (African American, African, Caribbean, Hispanic, and Multiracial) were included. Majority of the sample identified at African American (70.1%) and were female (61.6%). Roughly 52% of the sample was college level students, while the remaining were middle and high school students. Most students indicated that their parents are still married (48.1%), and that both parents' highest level of education is a bachelor's degree. Table 1 contains detailed demographic information for the study participants overall, and based on data source.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics as a Percentage of the Overall Sample and of the Collection Source

Characteristic	Online (*n*=149)	Church 1 (*n*=67)	Church 2 (*n*=71)	Other (*n*=21)	Overall (*n*=308)
Race/Ethnicity					
Black/African American	51.0	88.1	87.3	90.5	70.1
Black/Hispanic	0.7	4.5	7.0	4.8	3.2
Black/Caribbean	1.3	1.5	0.0	0.0	1.0
Black/African	4.7	0.0	1.4	0.0	2.6
Multiracial	42.3	6.0	4.2	4.8	23.1
Gender					
Male	33.6	49.3	39.4	33.3	38.4
Female	66.4	50.7	60.6	66.7	61.6
Grade Level					
6th -8th	0.7	26.8	0.0	0.0	6.1
9th - 12th	0.7	71.6	83.1	90.5	41.0
College	98.8	1.5	16.9	9.5	52.7
Parents' Marital Status					
Married	44.3	56.7	49.3	42.9	48.1
Never Married	28.9	16.4	15.5	9.5	21.8
Live Together	0.7	3.0	11.3	19.0	4.9
Separated	6.0	10.4	9.9	14.3	8.4
Widowed	5.4	1.5	2.8	4.8	3.9
Divorced	14.8	11.9	11.3	9.5	13.0
Mother's Education Level					
Some High School	4.7	0.0	1.4	0.0	2.6
High School Graduate	14.8	6.0	12.7	9.5	12.0
Some College	20.8	10.4	14.1	9.5	16.2
Associate's Degree	10.7	7.5	5.6	9.5	8.8
Bachelor's Degree	28.2	41.8	38.0	57.1	35.4
Professional Degree	18.1	20.9	18.3	14.3	18.5
Father's Education Level					

Some High School	4.7	1.5	1.4	0.0	2.9
High School Graduate	23.5	10.4	19.7	14.3	19.2
Some College	16.1	9.0	9.9	9.5	12.7
Associate's Degree	10.1	11.9	12.7	28.6	12.3
Bachelor's Degree	21.5	31.3	21.1	33.3	24.4
Professional Degree	20.1	13.4	22.5	4.8	18.2

Measures/ Variables

The survey packet used in the current study can be found in the Appendix. In addition to the survey packet, a table consisting of all of the measures and how they were coded and combined to create subscales and latent variables can also be found.

Demographics. Participants were given a questionnaire of different demographic variables that were used to better understand sample characteristics. Variables specifically used in the current study include race/ethnicity, parent level of education, grade level, math achievement, reading achievement, and overall achievement. Participants were asked to select their race as one of the following: Black/African American, Black/ African, Black/ Hispanic, Black/ Caribbean, White, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial. Those selecting multiracial had an opportunity to indicate the racial groups in which they belong. Two questions pertaining to mother and father's highest level of education were asked as a proxy for socioeconomic status. Participants were asked to indicate their parents' highest level of education as high school, some college, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree/professional degree, or unknown. These variables were included as control variables to account for SES differences in academic achievement.

Academic achievement. The academic achievement variable was assessed using three indicators: math achievement, reading achievement, and overall achievement. Previous research has found that although there is a slight inflation of self-reported grades for students whose performance is

low (C average and below), overall self-reported grades are consistent with school-provided achievement (Dornbusch et al., 1987). For all three achievement questions participants were asked to indicate their current grade in each area by selecting whether they receive mostly A's, A's and B's, Mostly B's, B's and C's, Mostly C's, C's and D's, or Mostly D's and below. College students were asked to consider the last time they were in a math/reading class if not currently enrolled in one. Values for this variable were reverse scored for consistency in interpretation. Therefore, higher scores on this outcome indicate higher achievement/academic success.

Parent and peer racial socialization. The two variables of peer and parent racial socialization were measured using the Cultural and Racial Experiences of Socialization (CARES; Bentley-Edwards & Stevenson, 2013) scale. The CARES is a comprehensive measure of race-related messages, the source of those messages, and the frequency in which they were experienced. Although the CARES is comprised of two instruments (i.e., a parent and youth version), this study focused on the *Youth-CARES-Frequency.* Five subscales emerge from this measure: racial protection, racial stereotyping, cultural insights, bicultural coping, and old school basics. Sample items can be found in the Appendix. There are three primary questions that this measure addresses: (1) what type of racial socialization messages are being communicated, (2) what is the relationship between the respondent and the source of these messages, (3) how frequently has the participant heard these messages? The type of racial socialization message being conveyed is captured by the scores on the five different subscales. The sources of the socialization message are acquired from a "check all that apply" option (F=*Friend/Peer*, S=*Sibling*, M=*Mom/Guardian*, D=*Dad/Guardian*, G=*Grandparents, and* T=*Teacher/Professor*) for each item. And lastly, the frequency of each message is measured by endorsing one of three Likert-type options (1=*Never*, 2=*A Few Times*, 3=*Lots of Times*). The five subscales of each peer/parent source were used as five separate indicator items for parent racial socialization and peer racial

socialization. In its initial validation, the *Youth-CARES- Frequency* had strong reliability (α=.89) in a sample of 373 Black youth aged 12-25 (Bentley-Edwards & Stevenson, 2013). For the current study, overall reliability for the scale was good (α=.94), and all subscales demonstrated adequate to good reliability (α=.69 - .89).

Parent academic socialization. The Educational Socialization Scale (Bempechat, Graham, & Jimenez, 1999; Mordkowitz & Ginsburg, 1987) was used to measure the messages that participants' parents share about education and academic achievement. This child-reported measure of educational socialization contains a total 17 items and participants are to endorse whether these messages are true on a Likert-type scale of *never* (1) to *almost every day* (5). The measure contains five subscales of socialized messages: future (e.g., "*My parents say it's important to think about what I want to be when I grow up."*), teaching [e.g., *My parents (or someone else at home) help me with homework (not math)]*, effort (e.g., *"My parents say I could do better in school if I worked harder."*), shame (e.g., "*I feel ashamed if I do badly in school"*), and guilt-oriented (e.g., "*I feel badly that my parents have to work so hard.")*. The ESS has demonstrated good validity (Bempechat et al., 1999) and reliability of the subscales (Strambler, Linke, & Ward, 2013) in diverse samples of middle school-aged students. For example, Strambler, Linke and Ward (2013) used the ESS in a sample of 367 students (37% Black) and found the reliabilities of four subscales to range from .85 to .67. The reliability of the guilt-oriented subscale was only adequate (α=.47). However, Bempechat et al. (1999) calculated a guilt-oriented reliability of 0.76, the second highest of all subscale reliabilities, in their sample of 595 fifth and sixth graders. For the current sample, Cronbach alpha coefficients suggested good reliability overall (α=.89) and for the five subscales (α=.79 - .88). Therefore, all items and subscales were retained.

Peer academic socialization. To get a sense of the messages that participants receive from their peers, an adapted version of the Peers' Academic Aspirations and Support Scale (PAASS; Murdock, 1999) was used. The PAASS is a subset of the questions included on Murdock's (1999) scales of Peer and Teacher Influence on Achievement. To ensure that responses reflect socialization rather than perceptions of peers' beliefs, minor modifications were made to the existing instrument. Changes to specific items are denoted by text included in brackets. Participants endorsed how often they have seen or heard their friends say or do the following statements. Likert-type scale response options ranged from *never* (1) to *almost every day* (5). The instrument contains a total of 13 items consisting of three subscales: peers' academic aspirations (4 items; e.g., *"Most of my friends [say that they] plan to go to college"*), peers' resistance to school norms (4 items; e.g., *"My friends tease kids who do their homework"*), and peers' academic support (5 items; e.g., *"My friends [say that they] work pretty hard in school"*). The PAASS demonstrated adequate reliability (α= .65 - .76) in a sample of 405 seventh grade students (31% Black) during initial scale development. (Nelson & DeBacker, 2008) used an adapted version of the peers' resistance to school norms subscale and achieved a Cronbach alpha value of .80 when changing "friends" to "classmates". Because the current study sought to get an idea of Black adolescents' friendships rather than classmates, the researcher used "friends" in the items. Cronbach alpha coefficients for the adapted measure were calculated for the current study. Initially, the Cronbach alpha value for the overall measure indicated poor reliability (α=.632). A closer investigation of items revealed that items, 1, 4, 5 and 8 all had poor correlation with the other items one the scale overall. Therefore, all four of these items were excluded from the current study. The resulting Cronbach alpha from the remaining nine items suggested adequate reliability (α=.74), however reliability could be improved by removing the remaining items of the "resistance to school norms" subscale. Therefore, the items included in the current study are items 2,3, and 9-13

from the peer academic aspirations and peer academic support subscales. The final Cronbach alpha demonstrated good reliability overall (α=.87) and for both subscales (α=.78 and α=.89).

Achievement attitudes. Participants' achievement values, or the extent to which the adolescent places importance on and makes meaning of academic achievement, was measured by two different scales. The first scale comes from Murdock's (1999) Peer and Teacher Influence on Achievement collection of instruments: Economic Value of Education Scale (EVES). The EVES is a 15-item, Likert-type (1=*really disagree* to 5=*really agree*) scale consisting of two subscales: limits of education (10 items; e.g., *"Many of the things we do in school seem useless to me*") and benefits of education (5 items; e.g., "*If I do well in school, I will get a good job")*. Both subscales demonstrate good reliability (α= .70 & .65) in middle school populations (Murdock, 1999). In consideration of survey length, only the five highest-loading items from the limits of education subscale will be used in this study. Other studies (Darensbourg & Blake, 2014) have used a similar approach and found the subscale to still have good reliability in a sample of 181 Black youth (α= .72). The overall Cronbach alpha for the EVES demonstrated poor reliability (α=.56), but had no recommendations for improvements. This may suggest that the subscales of the EVES should not be combined to form an overall score for the current sample. As a result, only the benefits to education subscale was used given that it was the scale with the five items showing the most reliability (α=.82).

In addition to the EVES, two subscales from the School Attitude Assessment-Revised (SAAR; McCoach & Siegle, 2003) measure was used to capture abstract achievement values and academic self-concept. The SAAR has a total of five subscales; however, in consideration of survey length only the subscales useful to the current study were included. The subscales used were Academic Self-Perception and Goals. The academic self-perception subscale is a measure of academic self-concept and has a total of 7 items (e.g., *"I am capable of getting straight A's*."). The Goals subscale contains 6

items and is a measure of abstract values (e.g., *"It's important to get good grades in school*"). Previous research has found these subscales to demonstrate good reliability (Dedrick, Shaunessy-Dedrick, Suldo, & Ferron, 2015; McCoach & Siegle, 2003; Wang & Eccles, 2013). The overall Cronbach alpha for these two subscales of the SAAR suggested good reliability (α=.93), and reliability for both subscales was also good (α=.90 and .96). However, the correlation between subscales yielded a very high Pearson coefficient, indicating that keeping them separate may cause issues of multicollinearity. Therefore, the overall composite score for the SAAR will be used as a measure of abstract values.

Analytical Approach

This study sought to understand the process through which socialization messages influence academic achievement. Previous research has found that both academic socialization and racial socialization influence Black youths' achievement-related outcomes (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Suizzo et al., 2008). The current study extends this body of research by including the sources of these messages, as well as an investigation of the combined and distinct effects of each socialization type on achievement attitudes and subsequent academic grades. This will be done through preliminary analyses and hypothesis testing through structural equation modeling (SEM).

Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure that all SEM assumptions were met and that structural equation modeling can safely be conducted given the data characteristics. This first step in analyses will also aid in testing hypotheses 1 and 2: a positive correlation between academic socialization and academic achievement, and a positive correlation between racial socialization and academic achievement, respectively. For the primary analyses a two-step approach to SEM will be used. First, a confirmatory analysis for the measurement model will be conducted. I will then confirm whether the three models fit the data using full latent variable SEM. After establishing overall model

fit, an evaluation of significant paths, direct and indirect effects, as well as a comparison of two competing, nested models will be conducted to answer the more specific research questions. A further explanation of each step, as well as specific procedures used to test each hypothesis follows.

Data Preparation and Preliminary Analyses

Prior to conducting structural equation modeling, it is important to observe the data to ensure that a number of assumptions are upheld. SPSS will be used to run all preliminary analyses. First, I will inspect and clean the data to look for missing data, skewedness, kurtosis and outliers. Although AMOS, the SEM software that will be used in primary analyses, uses full information maximum likelihood procedure to correct for missing values, it is ideal to correct for these as much as possible prior to using the software. Thus, participants with 10% or more data missing may not be used in the current study. Additionally, missing items for remaining participants will be replaced with the median values. In regards to skewedness and kurtosis, values with an absolute value equal or greater than 2 will be considered for removal. Cronbach alpha values for each group of items will be computed as a measure of internal scale reliability. Cronbach alpha values less than 0.5 will be considered for removal from the current research study (Cortina, 1993).

A curve estimation for all relationships in the model will be completed to ensure that all relationships are sufficiently linear and can be estimated in AMOS since it uses a covariance-based structural equation modeling procedure. Additionally, it is important that all latent variables included in the model are discriminant from each other. To this end multicollinearity will be assessed to ensure that there is no redundancy in the variables. Although multicollinearity is sometimes a step ignored when conducting structural equation modeling, it is important to test for multicollinearity when sample sizes are smaller (Grewal, Cote, & Baumgartner, 2004).

Preliminary research questions. The descriptive statistics of the sample will be computed and will include sample characteristics and means and standard deviations of all variables included in the study. For the test of the preliminary research questions, a total score for each socialization type (one for academic and another for racial) will be calculated by combining scores on the parent and peer measures of each type, given overall reliability of the instrument. A summary of both preliminary research questions, their hypotheses and how they will be tested follows.

Research Question 1: Is there a relationship between academic socialization and academic achievement?

H 1: It is hypothesized that a positive correlation between academic socialization and academic achievement will be found.

H 1 Test: This hypothesis will be tested through correlations. The hypothesis will be supported if the relationship between academic socialization and academic achievement is significant at the .05 level. The correlation coefficient value will be reported.

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement?

H 2: It is hypothesized that a positive correlation between racial socialization and academic achievement exists.

H 2 Test: This hypothesis will also be tested through correlations. The hypothesis will be supported if the relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement is significant at the .05 level. The correlation coefficient value will be reported.

The Models

The next set of analytical steps are specific to the three structural models of achievement. Therefore, it may be beneficial to discuss the theory behind each model in how it relates to the selection and order of the variables. There are three structural models, one contains both academic and racial socialization influences (Figure 5), another only has academic socialization influences (Figure 6), and the other model has just racial socialization (Figure 7). The models were designed to test the influence of parents and peers on the achievement attitudes and subsequent academic achievement of Black youth. Because of the well documented differences in achievement due to socioeconomic status (Da Silva et al., 2007; Duncan & Magnuson, 2005; Ramirez & Carpenter, 2005), all three models control for the influence of SES on achievement. Both models were developed based on theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Spencer et al., 1997) and previous research findings (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Darensbourg & Blake, 2014; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Suizzo et al., 2008).

In the figures of the structural models (i.e., Figures 5, 6 and 7) latent variables, measured variables, and disturbance terms are all included. Measured variables are represented by rectangles and will be created from subscale composites and individual demographic questionnaire item responses. The ovals represent latent variables. These variables are not directly observed in this study; however, their values are inferred by their measured indicator variables. Table 2 contains a description of all latent variables and their measurement components.

Table 2. Latent Variables and Their Specific Indicator Items and Instrument Source

Latent Construct	*Indicators*	Instrument	Items per Composite
Parent Academic Socialization	Future	Education Socialization Scale (ESS)	4 *(5 point Likert)*
	Teaching		3
	Effort		4
	Shame		4

	Guilt		2
Peer Academic socialization	Resistance to Norms	Peers' Academic Aspirations and Support Scale (PAASS)	4 *(5 point Likert)*
	Academic Aspirations		4
	Academic Support		5
Parent Racial Socialization	Racial protection (RP)	Cultural And Racial Experiences of Socialization- Youth (CARES)	10 (*3 point Likert)*
	Racial Stereotyping (RS)		10
	Cultural Insights (CI)		6
	Bicultural Coping (BC)		5
	Old School Basics (B)		4
Peer Racial Socialization	RP	Youth- CARES	10 (*3 point Likert)*
	RS		10
	CI		6
	BC		5
	B		4
Academic Socialization	Parental Influence	ESS	Total Score (17 items)
	Peer Influence	PAASS	Total Score (13 items)
Racial Socialization	Parental Influence	CARES	Total Score (35 items)
	Peer Influence		Total Score (35 items)
Achievement Attitudes	Abstract Values	School Attitude Assessment-Revised (SAAR): Goals Subscale	6 *(4 point Likert*)
	Concrete Values	Economic Value of Education Scale (EVES)	10 *(5 point Likert)*
	Competency Beliefs	SAAR: Academic Self-Perception Subscale	7 *(4 point Likert*)
Academic Achievement	Reading	Demographic Questionnaire	1
	Math		1
	Overall		1

In the structural models, disturbances of latent and measured variables are included and are represented by small circles. Disturbances for latent variables represent all of the influences on these variables that are not included in the model. Similarly, the disturbances for the measured variables represent the influences on the measured variables other than the latent variable. These disturbances help account for the error in measurement that is common to measuring abstract concepts (e.g.,

achievement attitudes). Thus, including these errors highlights one of the benefits of structural equation modeling: a more accurate estimate of the relationships between latent variables in the model (Keith, 2006).

Variables Included in the Models

As stated previously, the current study uses Expectancy Value Theory (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) as the theoretical framework that drives the model. For this reason, variable selection, path directions, and order of latent variable entry is largely influenced by EVT, along with logic and previous research findings. Additionally, the other theoretical framework, PVEST (Spencer, 1995; Spencer et al., 1997), largely influenced the inclusion of culture-specific variables of racial socialization in the racial and combined models of achievement created for this study. It is important that both theory and logic inform the order in which you include variables in structural models (Keith, 2014). To this end, a brief explanation of the order of the variables included in the models follows.

All three models follow the same, general order: external social influences, internal psychological processes, and an outcome variable of achievement. Both PVEST and EVT place importance on the influence that the cultural/social milieu has on developing internal strengths (as explained in PVEST) and interpsychic beliefs (as explained in EVT). What differs for the two frameworks, and relatedly, the different models in the study, are the nature of the messages provided by the milieu.

PVEST asserts that culture plays an important role for ethnic minority youth adjustment and is a strength and protective factor that helps them overcome future challenges (Spencer & Swanson, 2013; Swanson et al., 2002). Because this study focuses on Black youth and they process through which they develop positive academic outcomes, I would be remiss to not include variables that speak

to a common cultural experience among Black youth. Racial socialization is revered highly in the literature as being a resource that parents provide their children with from early stages of development and onwards (Bentley et al., 2009). However, racial socialization is multidimensional and can come from peers, parents, and other informants. Unfortunately, limited information is available about different sources of socialization messages. Furthermore, the use of racial socialization overall rather than its' subtypes may be the reason for some of the inconsistent findings in the literature. Therefore, racial socialization from both peers and parents are observed in the current study, and all five subtypes will be used as indicator items to examine specific contributions.

EVT focuses on the academic expectations and values that the social milieu holds and how those expectations and values are transmitted to the adolescent and inform their own establishment of achievement attitudes (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Therefore, instead of focusing solely on racial socialization, socialization specific to education, namely, academic socialization should also be considered, as implied by EVT. Similar to EVT, research on academic socialization have hypothesized the process through which this type of socialization operates. It has been proposed that parents share their view of education, and the child internalizes them and creates similar educational attitudes (Allen, 2015; Hill & Tyson, 2009). Still, the basic idea that social influences impact internal values remains consistent. Therefore, variables of academic socialization for youth are included first, and are then hypothesized to influence the youth's own academic attitudes and subsequent achievement. Previous research has found the additive nature of combining both education- and culture-specific socialization strategies for Black youth (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Suizzo et al., 2008). Therefore, consistent with the rationale for using both types of messages, as well as justification of the order of variables, the combined model follows similar structure.

Primary Analyses

To address the remaining research questions (3-7) a full structural equation modeling approach will be used. According to Keith (2006) a full latent variable modeling consists of a measurement model and a structural model, and both should be tested. A measurement model examines the connections between observed variables and their underlying latent variables by using a confirmatory factor analysis. Alternatively, the structural model illustrates the interrelationships among latent variables. Therefore, I will first conduct a Keith (2006) confirmatory factor analysis of indicator items and their latent variables to observe how well the observed variables relate to each other and represent their respective constructs. Then, overall fit of the structural models and specific paths will be evaluated. Analysis of Moment Structures (Amos) will be used to test both the measurement and structural models. AMOS is a software package and SPSS module used for structural equation modeling and path analyses.

Goodness of fit. To assess how well the models fit the data, a total of four fit indices will be used: chi-square statistic, standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), comparative fit index (CFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The chi-square statistic is commonly used to evaluate model fit. Chi-square statistics assess the difference between the observed and hypothesized covariance matrices. Although it is recommended to report in all factor analyses and is used to generate other fit indices, chi-square values are very sensitive to large sample sizes, thus, are rarely reported alone. Some researchers have recommended using a normed chi-square instead of the regular chi-square statistic when using large sample sizes (Wheaton, Muthén, Alwin, & Summers, 1977). The normed chi-square value is calculated by dividing the chi-square by the degrees of freedom. However, I do not anticipate having a large sample size, so the normed chi-square would be inadequate in assessing model fit for the current study. To this end, chi-square values will be reported.

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) will also be used to determine model fit to the data. The SRMR is an absolute measure of fit and does not penalize for more complex structural models. It is important to note that the SRMR is positively biased, meaning that in studies with smaller sample sizes and lower degrees of freedom, SRMR is larger than average. SRMR values of 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999) are said to indicate adequate model fit and values less than 0.05 are most desirable (Byrne, 2013). The Root Measure Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is a model fit index that does not assume that the hypothesized model fits the data. This index accounts for the error of approximation by evaluating the degree to which the proposed model does not fit the population covariance matrix. RMSEA values of 0.06 or lower indicate good model fit to the data (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The RMSEA is another positively biased measure of model fit and is also one of the most commonly reported fit statistics for CFA and SEM research. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was used because it takes sample size into account and is one of the most used fit indices. The CFI is an incremental fit index and is recommended by Kline (2010) to be included in model fit. CFI values range from 0 to 1.0 with larger values indicating better fit. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), values greater than 0.95 indicate good model fit to the data. Rationale for each decision on model fit will be provided using these fit indices as support.

A test of the change in chi-square ($\Delta\chi^2$) and a difference in CFI will be used to compare competing, nested models, including the nested models used to answer the research question pertaining to significant differences in paths (RQ 3). A significant result from the $\Delta\chi^2$ test suggests that the models fit the data differently and the model with the most freely estimated parameters should be chosen as the best fitting model. Similarly, if the $\Delta\chi^2$ is not significant the two models do not differ and the model with the least amount of parameters freely estimated should be chosen. $\Delta\chi^2$ is revered as the most common method of comparing models and is recommended to be used when comparing

models (Keith, 2006). However, ΔCFI is receiving growing attention in the literature and has also been recommended as important when comparing nested models (Byrne, 2013). Based on their study of several goodness-of-fit indices, Cheung and Rensvold (2002) argue that CFI difference values <0.01 are evidence of non-invariance (differences). Given both of these recommendations, both values will be used to compare models in my study.

Primary research questions. To answer the primary research questions for this study that pertain to direct effects and mediation (RQs 3-7), I will look at path coefficients and their significance. In particular, the effect of the mediator will be determined by looking at indirect effects using the bootstrapping method within AMOS (Arbuckle & Wothke, 1999; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Each full structural model and its associated research questions, hypotheses, and specific test of the hypothesis follows.

Figure 5. Full Latent Variable Model of the Combined Socialization Model of Academic Achievement

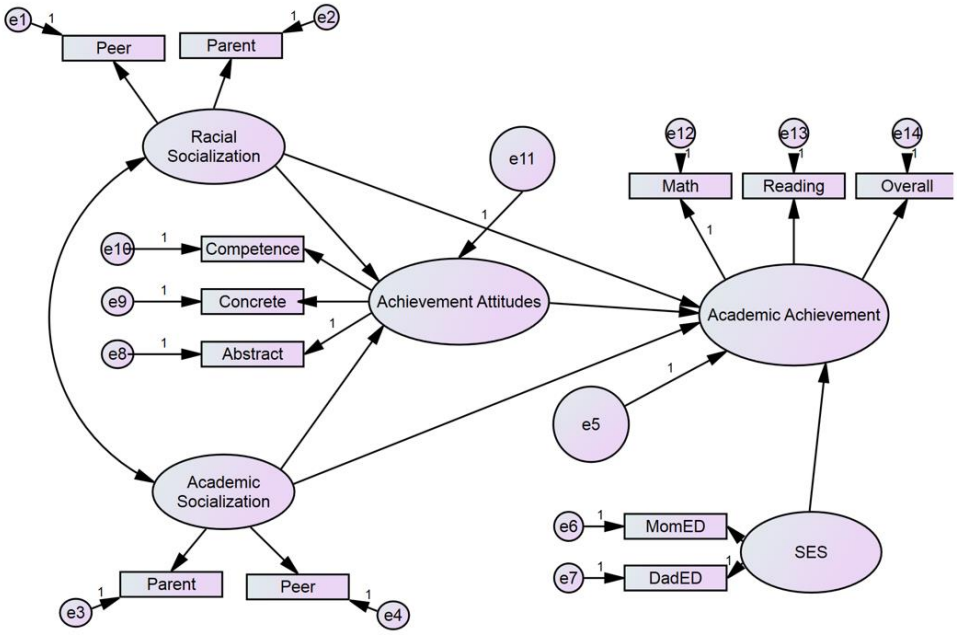

Figure 5. Complete structural model for combined socialization influence on achievement-related outcomes, controlling for academic achievement differences due to socioeconomic status. The ovals represent latent variable constructs and the arrows point to the rectangles containing the observed variables.

RQ 3: Is there a significant difference in the influence of racial or academic socialization on achievement attitudes?

H 3: The academic socialization path to achievement attitudes will significantly differ from the path of racial socialization to achievement attitudes.

H 3 Test: To test this hypothesis, a series of steps will need to be taken. First, a fully unconstrained model will need to be established. This will be accomplished by resolving any issues in overall model fit. Both the chi-square value and CFI will be reported for this unconstrained model (as well as other fit statistics). Next, the two unstandardized paths (i.e., academic socialization to achievement attitudes and racial socialization to achievement attitudes) will be constrained to be equal. Thus, using AMOS, I will set both to be equal to some arbitrary letter (e.g., 'a') and run this more constrained model. Again, chi-square and CFI values will be recorded. A comparison of model fit for the model without an equality constraint and the constrained model will be conducted (i.e., change in chi-square and change in CFI). If the model fit with the equality constraint differs significantly from the model without the equality constraint (unconstrained model), then it is decided that the unstandardized paths are significantly different; thus, academic socialization and racial socialization have differing impacts of achievement attitudes and the hypothesis will be

supported. Significant changes are defined as a significant p-value at the .05 level for the change in chi-square test, and a change in CFI greater than .01.

RQ 4: Do peer and parent academic socialization influence Black youth's academic achievement?

RQ 4a: Does peer academic socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement outcomes?

H 4a: The path from peer academic socialization to academic achievement will be significantly positive.

Figure 6. Full Latent Variable Model of the Academic Socialization Model of Academic Achievement

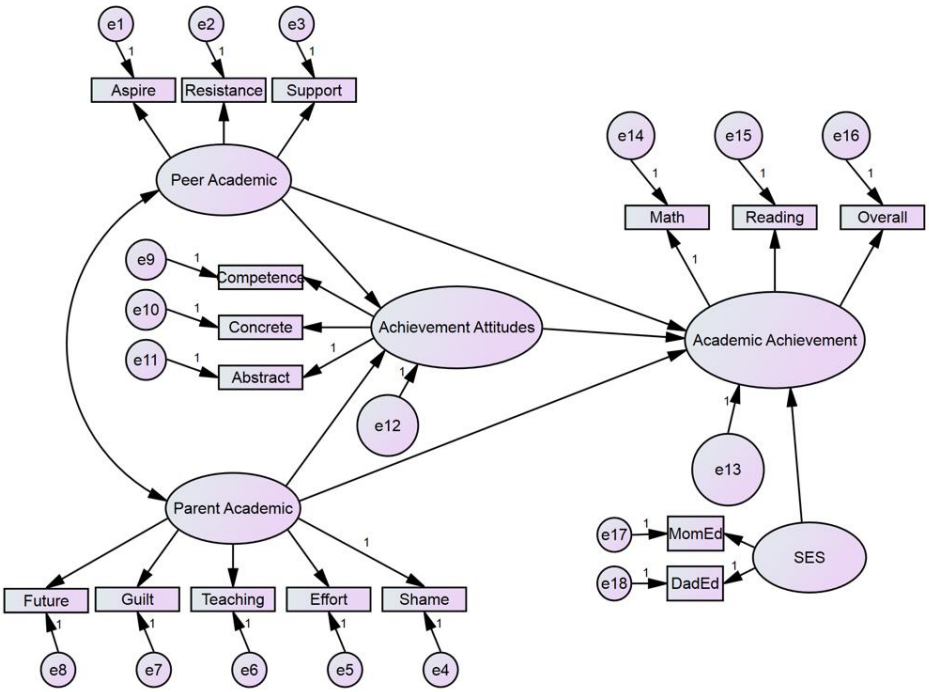

Figure 6. Complete structural model for academic socialization influence on achievement-related outcomes, controlling for academic achievement differences due to socioeconomic status. The ovals represent latent variable constructs and the arrows point to the rectangles containing the observed variables.

H 4a Test: This hypothesis will be supported if a significant direct effect of the peer academic socialization to academic achievement path is found, as shown in Figure 6.

RQ 4b: Does parent academic socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement outcomes?

H 4b: The path from parent academic socialization to academic achievement is hypothesized to be significantly positive.

H 4b Test: This hypothesis will be supported if a significant direct effect of the parent academic socialization to academic achievement path is found, as shown in Figure 6.

RQ 5: Do achievement attitudes mediate the relationship between peer and parent academic socialization and academic achievement?

RQ 5a: Is the relationship between peer academic socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

H 5a: Achievement attitudes will mediate the relationship between peer academic socialization and academic achievement.

H 5a Test: Mediation will be tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS. A significant indirect effect of peer academic socialization on academic achievement will demonstrate that the hypothesis is supported.

RQ 5b: Is the relationship between parent academic socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

H 5b: Achievement attitudes will mediate the relationship between parent academic socialization and academic achievement.

H 5b Test: Mediation will be tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS. A significant indirect effect of parent academic socialization on academic achievement will demonstrate that the hypothesis is supported.

Figure 7. Full Latent Variable Model of the Racial Socialization Model of Academic Achievement

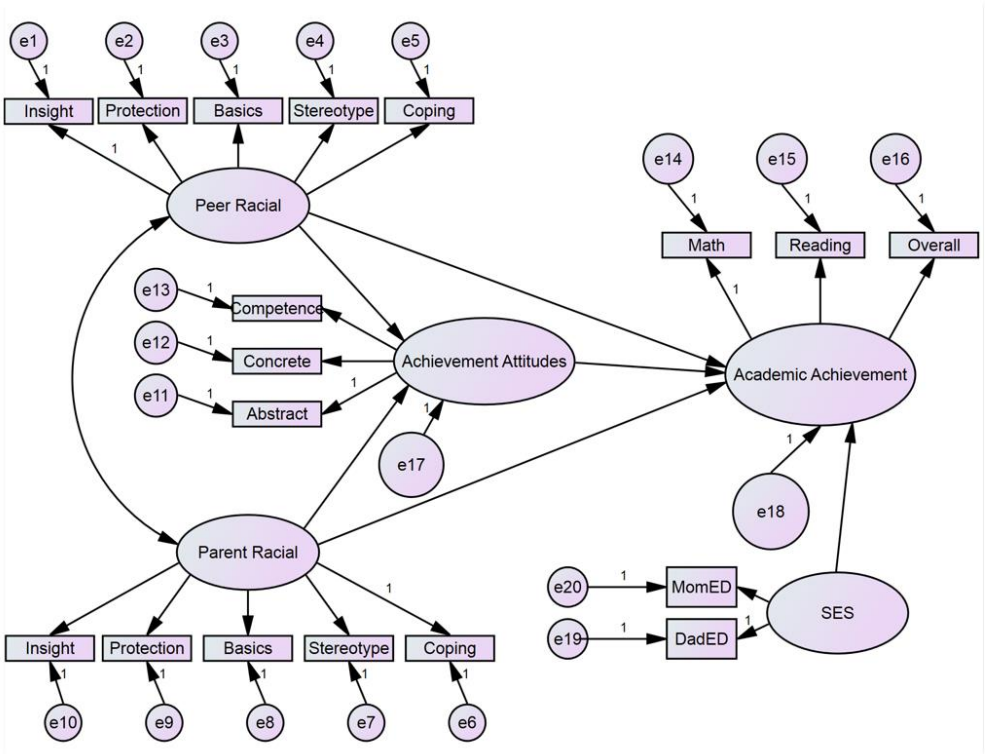

Figure 7. Complete structural model for racial socialization influence on achievement-related outcomes, controlling for academic achievement differences due to socioeconomic status. The ovals represent latent variable constructs and the arrows point to the rectangles containing the observed variables.

RQ 6: Do peer and parent racial socialization have a direct influence on Black youth's academic achievement?

RQ 6a: Does peer racial socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement?

H 6a: There will be a significantly positive relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement.

H 6a Test: This hypothesis will be retained given a significant direct effect of the peer racial socialization to academic achievement path, as shown in Figure 7.

RQ 6b: Does parent racial socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement?

H 6b: There will be a significantly positive relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement.

H 6b Test: The hypothesis will be supported given a significant direct effect of the parent racial socialization to academic achievement path, as shown in Figure 7.

RQ 7a: Is the relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

H 7a: The relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement will be mediated by achievement attitudes.

H 7a Test: Mediation will be tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS. A significant indirect effect of peer racial socialization on academic achievement will demonstrate that the hypothesis is supported.

RQ 7b: Is the relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

H 7b: The relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement will be mediated by achievement attitudes.

H 7b Test: Mediation will be tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS. A significant indirect effect of parent racial socialization on academic achievement will demonstrate that the hypothesis is supported.

Chapter IV: Results

A total sample of 308 participants between the ages of 13 and 25 who identified as Black (African American, African, Caribbean, Black Hispanic, and Multiracial) were included. Majority of the sample identified as African American (70.1%) and were female (61.6%). Table 1 contains detailed demographic information for the study participants overall, and based on data source.

Missing Data

Data from participants of the current study who did not respond to 90% or more of the survey questions were not included in analyses (Allison, 2002; Kline, 1998). Although the primary analyses in this study used AMOS 21 software, which uses Full Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) to account for missing data, the restrictions associated with using FIML would prevent answering key research questions. Specifically, when using FIML in AMOS, modification indices are not included in model output and bootstrapping procedures are not available. Both of these features were important in the current study, as bootstrapping was used to determine mediation effects, and modification indices were needed to determine areas for improved fit in the models. Therefore, missing data were imputed using the Expectation-Maximization (EM) method. Both FIML and EM are considered good solutions to missing data when using a structural equation modeling analyses (Arbuckle, 1996; Byrne, 2013; Keith, 2006), and the outcomes of both approaches often do not differ significantly. Missing data were imputed using Missing Values Analysis within SPSS 21.0. Overall, when the number of missing data are small, EM provides unbiased parameter estimates and improves the statistical power of analyses.

Inclusion of Control Variables

As mentioned previously, participants' parents' level of education was entered into each model as a control variable for academic achievement. This inclusion is due to existing research that has

found differences in the academic performance of youth from different socioeconomic backgrounds (Da Silva et al., 2007; Duncan & Magnuson, 2005; Ramirez & Carpenter, 2005). Furthermore, since differences in outcomes based on socioeconomic status was not the primary focus of this study, it was included as a control variable. Given the heterogeneity of the sample based on ethnicity, the race/ethnicity variable was considered as another control. To determine which variables, if any, needed to be controlled by race/ethnicity, mean differences in parent racial socialization, parent academic socialization, peer racial socialization, peer academic socialization, concrete achievement attitudes and abstract achievement attitudes across ethnic groups were tested using Analysis of Variances (ANOVAS). The results of the six ANOVAs are summarized in Table 3. Statistically significant differences in parental racial socialization, $F(4, 303) = 5.68$, $p < .001$, and parental academic socialization, $F(4, 303) = 3.60$, $p < .01$, were found based on ethnic group. There were also significant differences in peer racial socialization based on ethnic group, $F(4, 303) = 3.41$, $p < .01$.

Post hoc analyses were conducted using Tukey HSD tests for all possible pairwise comparisons. The test results revealed that mean differences were found between Black/African American and Black/Multiracial groups, in that African Americans reported more racial socialization ($M = 31.46$, $SD = 17.82$) than the Multiracial youth reported ($M = 20.19$, $SD = 16.90$), $p < .001$. African American youth also reported more academic socialization ($M = 3.25$, $SD = .71$) than the Multiracial youth reported ($M = 2.93$, $SD = .76$), $p < .05$. These findings are consistent with some research that suggests that parents of Multiracial youth are not likely to provide racial socialization (Marbury, 2006; Samuels, 2009), but differs from research that has found parents of Biracial youth with Black heritage to racially socialize their child similar to monoracial families (Rollins & Hunter, 2013). The significant difference found in peer racial socialization is likely due to differences in the racial composition of the youth's friendship groups (Doyle & Kao, 2007). Ideally, model fit for all

models of achievement would be evaluated separately for Multiracial youth; however, the sample size of the Multiracial group is not large enough to run separate latent variable SEM analyses. Since ethnic differences in model outcomes is not the focus of the current study, ethnicity was included as a control variable for parent academic socialization, and parent and peer racial socialization.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and One-Way Analyses of Variance for the Effect of Race/Ethnicity on Variables Included in the Models

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*F* (4,303)	*p*	η^2
Peer Racial Socialization	19.51	12.32	3.41	.009	.04
Parent Racial Socialization	28.81	18.04	5.68	<.001	.07
Peer Academic Socialization	3.75	0.82	0.96	.428	.01
Parent Academic Socialization	3.18	0.73	3.60	.007	.05
Concrete Attitudes	15.91	3.04	0.86	.487	.01
Abstract Attitudes	3.55	0.65	0.66	.620	.01

Preliminary Research Questions

RQ1 Is there a relationship between academic socialization and academic achievement?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that there would be a positive correlation between academic socialization and academic achievement, in that more exposure to academic socialization is related to academic success. In order to test this research question, correlations between peer academic socialization and academic achievement, as well as parent academic socialization and academic achievement were evaluated for significance. Based on the results of Pearson correlations found in Table 4, parent academic socialization has a significantly negative correlation with self-reported math achievement, $r(306) = -.12$, $p < .05$, and with reading achievement, $r(306) = -.15$, $p < .05$. Alternatively, parent academic socialization does not have a significant relationship with overall academic

achievement. Peer academic socialization has a significantly positive relationship with reading achievement, r(306)=.15, p<.01, and overall achievement, r(306)=.17, p<.01. Peer academic socialization did not have a significant relationship with math achievement. Therefore, the results partially supported the hypothesis.

RQ2 Is there a relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that a positive correlation between racial socialization and academic achievement would exist. In order to test the hypothesis, correlations between peer racial socialization and the three achievement indicators, as well as parent racial socialization and the three achievement variables were evaluated for significance. Based on the results of Pearson correlations found in Table 4, parent racial socialization has a significantly negative correlation with self-reported reading achievement, r(306)= -.13, p<.05. There is not a significant relationship between parent racial socialization and math or overall achievement. In regard to peer racial socialization, there was a significantly negative relationship to math achievement, r(306)= -.16, p<.01, and overall achievement r(306)= -.13, p<.05. Peer academic socialization does not have a significant relationship with reading achievement. Therefore, the results partially supported the hypothesis.

Primary Analyses

The remaining research questions were answered using the results obtained from the AMOS output of each model. Therefore, overall model fit must be assessed prior to addressing research questions 3 through 7. First, all three measurement models were tested to ensure that relationships between measured variables and their latent constructs were accurately identified. Paths from all measured variables and their respective latent constructs were drawn, and one path was constrained to one to set the scale of the latent variable. All latent variables were allowed to correlate when testing

the measurement models. Areas of misfit and modifications that could improve fit of the measurement model were investigated. After adequate fit of the measurement model to the data was established, the full latent-variable structural models were tested. These models are intended to evaluate the relationships between latent constructs. For these models, modifications made during the testing of the measurement models are retained and the hypothesized relationships between latent constructs are drawn. An evaluation of fit statistics for each model will determine whether the model has good, adequate, or poor fit to the data. When nested models were compared, change in CFI values and change in chi-square were tested.

After successfully establishing at least adequate fit of the model to the data, specific research questions can be answered using the AMOS-provided output. For questions pertaining to significant direct relationships between latent variables, unstandardized path coefficients are provided along with the associated *p*-value. In cases where mediation is of interest, the unstandardized indirect effects, *p*-values and bias-corrected confidence intervals are provided.

Test of the Measurement Models

Correlations among all measured variables included in all models were computed. Means, standard deviations, and correlations of variables can be found in Table 4. Most variables showed significant correlations with related indicator variables, and with the outcome variables. Two notable areas of concern were found in the correlation matrix. The correlation between two of the three indicator variables for the latent construct of achievement attitudes was significantly large. Specifically, the academic self-perception and goals subscales of the SAAR were highly related, $r(306)= 0.99$, $p< .001$. Keeping these variables as separate indicators would have potentially lead to problems of multicollinearity; therefore, these two subscales were combined for an overall abstract

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of All Variables Included in the Models

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1. Parent Racial	—																									
2. Peer Racial	.54**	—																								
3. Parent Academic	.27**	.11	—																							
4. Peer Academic	.01	-.09	.03	—																						
5. Future (PA)	.23**	.04	.65**	.19**	—																					
6. Teach (PA)	.09	-.04	.64**	-.01	.31**	—																				
7. Effort (PA)	.30**	.14*	.79**	.08	.49**	.43**	—																			
8. Shame (PA)	.18**	.09	.68**	-.17**	.27**	.24**	.48**	—																		
9. Guilt (PA)	.18**	.13*	.71**	.06	.36**	.23**	.41**	.38**	—																	
10. Aspire (PeA)	.00	-.08	.04	.72**	.16**	-.04	.08	-.11	.09	—																
11. Support (PeA)	.01	-.09	.02	.95**	.17**	.01	.06	-.17**	.04	.48**	—															
12. Protection (PeR)	.51**	.88**	.11	-.05	.04	-.04	.14*	.08	.16**	-.06	-.03	—														
13. Stereotyping (PeR)	.42**	.85**	.06	-.09	.01	-.12*	.12*	.09	.10	-.06	-.09	.62**	—													
14. Basics (PeR)	.44**	.87**	.04	-.12*	.01	-.06	.07	.05	.08	-.07	-.12*	.71**	.65**	—												
15. Insight (PeR)	.32**	.58**	.09	-.03	.04	.10	.08	.04	.06	-.04	-.02	.37**	.37**	.51**	—											
16. Coping (PeR)	.45**	.78**	.14*	-.10	.07	.07	.17**	.10	.09	-.04	-.10	.56**	.58**	.71**	.55**	—										
17. Protection (PR)	.82**	.41**	.21**	.06	.18**	.02	.24**	.18**	.14*	.07	.04	.45**	.29**	.35**	.16**	.29**	—									
18. Stereotyping (PR)	.77**	.44**	.17**	-.04	.18**	.04	.20**	.11	.09	-.01	-.04	.39**	.42**	.33**	.25**	.340**	.44**	—								
19. Basics (PR)	.84**	.42**	.24**	.01	.22**	.06	.27**	.14*	.17**	-.01	.02	.36**	.32**	.36**	.32**	.34**	.59**	.56**	—							
20. Coping (PR)	.62**	.36**	.26**	.00	.18**	.20**	.26**	.08	.21**	-.04	.01	.30**	.23**	.32**	.32**	.39**	.29**	.49**	.50**	—						
21. Insight (PR)	.78**	.43**	.19**	-.02	.18**	.07	.19**	.15*	.10	-.04	.00	.36**	.36**	.38**	.28**	.37**	.51**	.51**	.75**	.42**	—					
22. Abstract	.20**	-.02	.25**	.41**	.35**	.06	.22**	.10	.19**	.27**	.40**	.03	-.04	-.07	-.01	-.01	.20**	.11*	.19**	.14*	.14*	—				
23. Concrete	.29**	.10	.30**	.30**	.31**	.08	.36**	.08	.24**	.25**	.27**	.14*	.05	.00	.09	.11	.23**	.19**	.28**	.18**	.23**	.48**	—			
24. Math	-.08	-.16**	-.12*	.11	.01	-.08	-.20**	-.12*	-.02	.15*	.07	-.15**	-.19**	-.13*	-.01	-.06	-.03	-.11	-.08	-.03	-.10	.13*	.02	—		
25. Reading	-.13*	-.11	-.15*	.15**	-.03	-.16**	-.20**	-.11	-.02	.11*	.14*	-.06	-.09	-.12*	-.18**	-.05	-.10	-.10	-.10	-.05	-.17**	.22**	.04	.30**	—	
26. All Grades	-.04	-.13*	-.10	.17**	.07	-.09	-.20**	-.10	-.02	.11	.17**	-.07	-.13*	-.17**	-.09	-.10	.01	-.07	-.05	-.04	-.05	.24**	.11	.55**	.54**	—
Mean	28.81	19.51	3.18	3.75	3.72	2.40	3.43	2.94	3.42	4.01	3.65	6.09	5.51	3.02	2.33	2.51	10.99	4.94	5.13	3.35	4.16	3.55	3.18	5.34	5.88	5.69
SD	18.04	12.32	0.73	0.82	0.83	1.13	0.98	1.07	1.25	0.98	0.90	4.98	4.18	2.35	1.47	2.04	7.73	5.29	3.96	3.31	3.42	0.65	0.61	1.32	1.09	0.91

Note. Latent variables of indicator items are represented in the parenthesis after the measurement name. PA = parent academic socialization. PeA= peer academic socialization. PeR = peer racial socialization. PR= parent racial

*p< .05. **p< .01

values subscale. Thus, all three models now have two indicators for the achievement attitudes latent variable: abstract and concrete attitudes. Another area of concern was the non-significant relationship between parent and peer academic socialization as measured in the current study, *r(*306)= 0.03, *p*= .591. This non-significant relationship suggests that the combined model of achievement, which has parent and peer academic socialization as the two indicator variables for the academic socialization latent variable, may be problematic. No other concerns regarding the correlation of variables within the models were found.

A series of confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to test the measurement models of the hypothesized models of achievement.[1] As suspected, when testing the measurement model of the combined model of achievement problems arose. The results of the measurement model yielded a poor fitting model $X^2(22) = 65.94$, $p<.001$, CFI=.92, RMSEA= .08, SRMR= .09. A closer look at the relationships between latent variables and measured indicator revealed issues in model measurement. The combined model of achievement has a total of four latent variables, three of which only have two measured indicator variables. Although having two indicator variables per factor is allowed, many researchers caution against it (Rigdon, 1995), and recommend having at least three measured variables per latent factor (Keith, 2006). In cases in which there are only two indicator variables, it is best that these indicator variables be significantly correlated and that loadings be similar and high. The measured variables of parent academic socialization and peer academic socialization were not significantly correlated, *r*(306)= .03, *p*= .591, and each have low factor loadings on their latent variable. Figure 8 shows the standardized measurement model for the combined model of achievement which is deemed insufficient.

[1] All analyses were also run exclusively with participants who self-identified as African American (not those who identified as African, Caribbean, etc.), and no significant difference in outcomes were found. For the sake of brevity, these results were not included in the final analyses.

Figure 8. Results of the Combined Measurement Model of Achievement

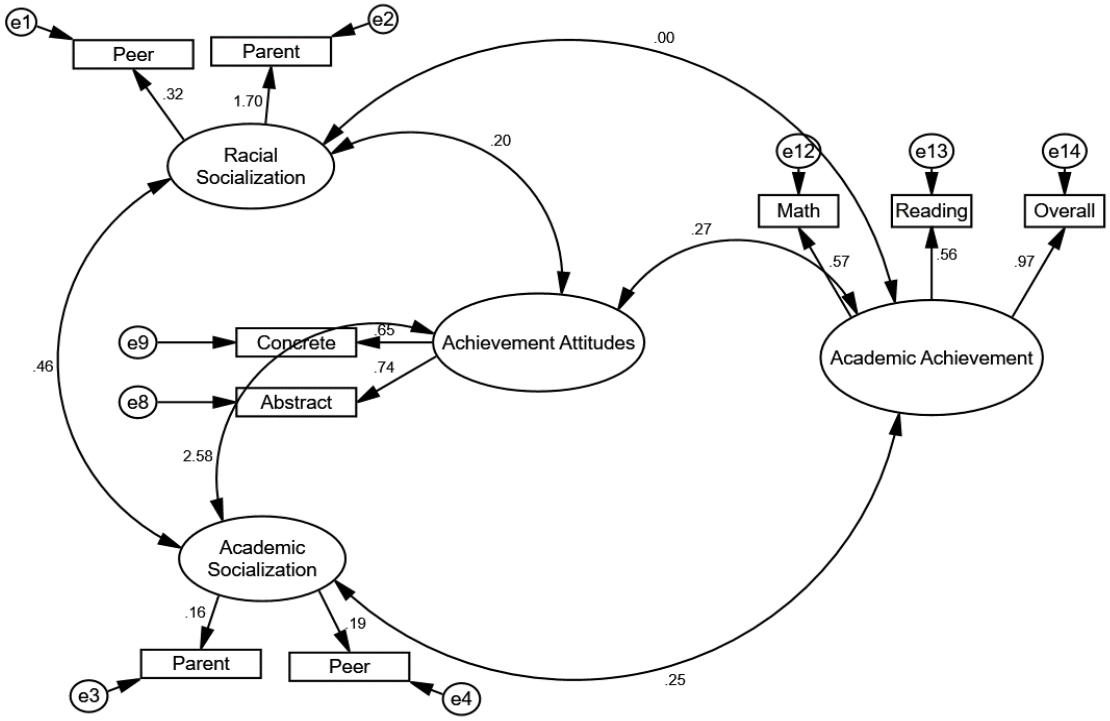

Figure 8. Measurement model of the combined model of achievement with standardized path estimates. Low factor loadings and standardized values greater than one indicate the model is insufficient. Latent variables are represented by ovals, with their measured indicator variables represented by rectangles.

To resolve the measurement issues for the combined model of achievement, it was decided to use a single measured variable for both socialization types, rather than using latent variables. This will allow for comparisons of socialization types to still be made. The initial model showed good fit to the data $X^2(10) = 24.95$, $p<.01$, CFI= .96, RMSEA= .07, SRMR= .05. Given that none of the suggested modifications were notably large or made theoretical sense, no modifications to the combined model of achievement were made. Table 5 shows the fit statistics of each initial measurement model, as well as the fit indices after successive modifications (i.e., correlation of errors) were made. Justifications

for all modifications can be found below. All final models were used as the foundation for the structural models.

Table 5

Fit Statistics for Measurement Models Including Modifications

Model	χ^2 (N=308)	d*f*	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	χ^2/d*f* ratio
Academic Initial	114.23***	48	.92	.07	.07	2.38
Shame & Support	104.92***	47	.93	.06	.06	2.23
Shame & Aspire	97.25***	46	.94	.06	.06	2.11
Shame & Guilt (Final model)	91.17***	45	.95	.06	.06	2.03
Racial Initial	210.91***	84	.93	.07	.06	2.51
Protection & Protection	187.39***	83	.95	.06	.05	2.26
Stereotyping & Stereotyping	170.49***	82	.95	.06	.05	2.08
Stereotype & Coping[a]	153.16***	81	.96	.05	.05	1.89
Insight & Coping[b] (Final model)	140.46***	80	.97	.05	.53	1.76
Combined Final	24.95**	10	.96	.70	.05	2.50

Note. Modifications were made through the correlation of the errors of the variables listed in the table. CFI = Comparative Fit Index. RMSEA = Root Mean Standardized Error of Approximation. SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.

[a]Both are indicators of the parent racial socialization latent variable. [b]Both are indicators of the peer racial socialization latent variable.

**p<.01. ***p<.001.

Academic modification #1. The modification indices showed that the largest index value was 8.53 and would result in a parameter change of -0.116 if the shame and support errors were allowed to freely correlate. A closer look at these subscales and items show that they are likely related because fear of causing one's parents shame may lead an individual to hang around peers that support them in their academic efforts. Based on the modification index and the relationship between the items, the correlation between the two errors was freely estimated. The overall ΔX^2 was significant, p<.01, indicating that the added correlation resulted in a better fitting model.

Academic modification #2. The next modification index value was 5.94 and would result in a parameter change of -0.109 if the errors of the shame and aspiration measured variables were allowed to correlate. Similar to the previously justified relationship, shame and aspirations may be related

through feelings of shame causing students to select friends who have higher academic aspirations. Based on the modification index and the relationship between the items, the correlation between the two errors was freely estimated. The overall ΔX^2 was significant, $p<.01$, indicating that the added correlation resulted in a better fitting model.

Academic modification #3. Allowing the errors of the shame and guilt variables to be correlated had a modification index value of 5.36 and would result in a parameter change of .131. Both of these variables are indicators of the parent academic socialization latent variable. It makes theoretical sense that these two types of messages may be related, because an individual who is given messages of bringing shame on the family, may also feel guilty about the sacrifices their parents have already made. Based on the modification index and the relationship between the items, the correlation between the two errors was freely estimated. The overall ΔX^2 was significant, $p<.05$, indicating that the added correlation resulted in a better fitting model. No further modifications to the academic model of achievement were made given that none of the remaining recommended modifications made theoretical sense.

Racial modification #1. A look at the modification indices for the racial model of achievement revealed that the largest index value was 22.506 and would result in a parameter change of 5.620. The modification index recommended that the errors of the two protection measured variables be allowed to correlate. It makes sense that these two errors should be correlated, because they are the same messages (i.e., items), just different sources. Based on the modification index and the relationship between the items, the correlation between the two errors was freely estimated. The overall ΔX^2 was significant, $p<.001$, indicating that the added correlation resulted in a better fitting model.

Racial modification #2. The next modification index value was 16.32 and would result in a parameter change of 2.875 if the errors of the stereotyping indicators were allowed to be correlated.

Again, these subscales have the same items but differ in the source of these messages. To this end, the correlation between the two errors was freely estimated. The overall ΔX^2 was significant, $p<.001$, indicating that the added correlation resulted in a better fitting model.

Racial modification #3. If the stereotyping and coping errors for the parent socialization latent variable were allowed to be correlated, a parameter change of 2.624 could be expected as suggested by the modification index of 16.401. It makes theoretical sense that parents who communicate messages of rigid and stereotypical appraisals of race may also emphasize the importance of adopting bicultural values. Based on the modification index and the relationship between the items, the correlation between the two errors was freely estimated. The overall ΔX^2 was significant, $p<.001$, indicating that the added correlation resulted in a better fitting model.

Racial modification #4. A modification index value of 11.79 suggested that allowing the errors of the insight and coping indicators of the peer socialization latent variables would result in a parameter change of 0.325. These two subscales both communicate ideals of how Black people are supposed to behave. Cultural insight focuses on how Black people should act to be considered Black, and bicultural coping is how to be Black while in the mainstream culture. Historically, this experience of feeling as though your identity is divided has been referred to as 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1903). Since both factors pertain to identity, it is likely that there is shared variance not accounted for by the model. Based on the modification index and the relationship between the items, the correlation between the two errors was freely estimated. The overall ΔX^2 was significant, $p<.001$, indicating that the added correlation resulted in a better fitting model.

Test of the Structural Models

Table 6

Fit Statistics for All Three Structural Models Including Modifications

Model	χ^2(N=308)	d*f*	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	χ^2/d*f* ratio
Academic	149.82	76	.93	.06	.06	1.97
Racial	220.76	115	.95	.06	.06	1.92
Combined Initial	80.61	30	.91	.07	.07	2.69
Combined Final[a]	63.11	29	.94	.06	.06	2.18

Note. All chi-square tests had p-values less than ,001.
[a]The final combined model of achievement reflects the inclusion of a correlation between racial and academic measured variables.

To create the structural models, correlations between all latent variables were removed. Errors terms were included for all exogenous latent variables and control variables were entered. Any modifications that were recommended in the measurement models were retained when constructing the structural models, as this may help minimize the number of fit improvements that must be made during the structural model evaluation stage of SEM. The combined model initially demonstrated adequate fit to the data, $X^2(30) = 80.61$, $p < .001$, CFI= .91, RMSEA= .07, SRMR= .07, X^2 ratio= 2.69. However, a modification of allowing the errors of the parent racial and academic socialization to be correlated was suggested. Given that both measured variables are correlated, and both may have an overarching related construct of parenting style, they were allowed to correlate. The final combined model's fit statistics are: $X^2(29) = 63.11$, $p < .001$, CFI= .94, RMSEA= .06, SRMR= .06, X^2 ratio= 2.18. No further modifications were made to the academic or racial models of achievement. Thus, the

academic model's final fit statistics are: $X^2(76) = 149.82$, $p < .001$, CFI=.93, RMSEA= .06, SRMR= .06, X^2 ratio= 1.97. Fit statistics for the racial model are as follows: $X^2(115) = 220.80$, $p < .001$, CFI= .95, RMSEA= .06, SRMR= .06, X^2 ratio= 1.92. Overall, all models showed good fit to the data (see Table 6). Figures 9, 10 and 11 reflect the final structural models which were used to answer the remaining research questions.

Remaining Research Questions

RQ3 Is there a significant difference in the influence of racial or academic socialization on achievement attitudes?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that the academic socialization path to achievement attitudes would significantly differ from the path of racial socialization to achievement attitudes. The combined model (Figure 9) was used for this research question. To test this hypothesis, the unstandardized paths from both socialization types to achievement attitudes were constrained to be equal. The resulting chi-square and CFI values for the fully constrained model were: $X^2(30) = 82.84$, CFI=.90. The change in chi-square was significant (ΔX^2=19.73, $p < .001$), as was the change in CFI (ΔCFI=.035) since it was larger than the cutoff value of .01. Given these results, the hypothesis was supported, suggesting that there is a statistically significant difference in the influence of academic socialization on achievement attitudes and racial socialization on achievement attitudes. Therefore, given the results of this analysis, the hypothesis was fully supported.

Figure 9. Results of the Combined Structural Model of Achievement

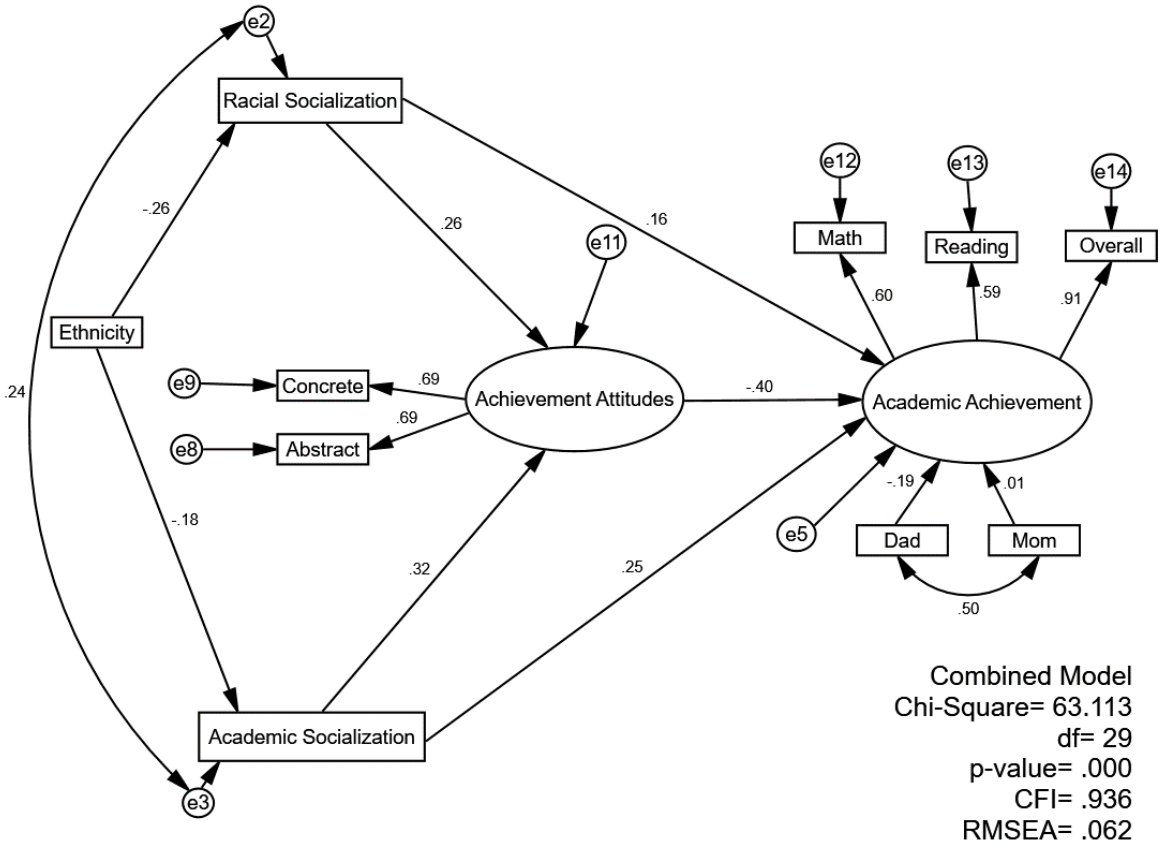

Figure 9. Structural model of the combined model of achievement with standardized path estimates. Latent variables are represented by ovals, with their measured indicator variables represented by rectangles.

RQ4a Does peer academic socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement outcomes?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that the path from peer academic socialization to academic achievement in the academic model would be significantly positive. The academic model of achievement (Figure 10) was used to test this research question. This hypothesis was tested by evaluating the significance of the direct effect of peer academic socialization on academic achievement. Based on the direct effects and their significance (see Table 6), peer academic

socialization did not have a significant influence on academic achievement (standardized estimate = .01, *p*=.965). Based on the results of this analysis, the hypothesis was not supported.

Figure 10. Results of the Academic Structural Model of Achievement

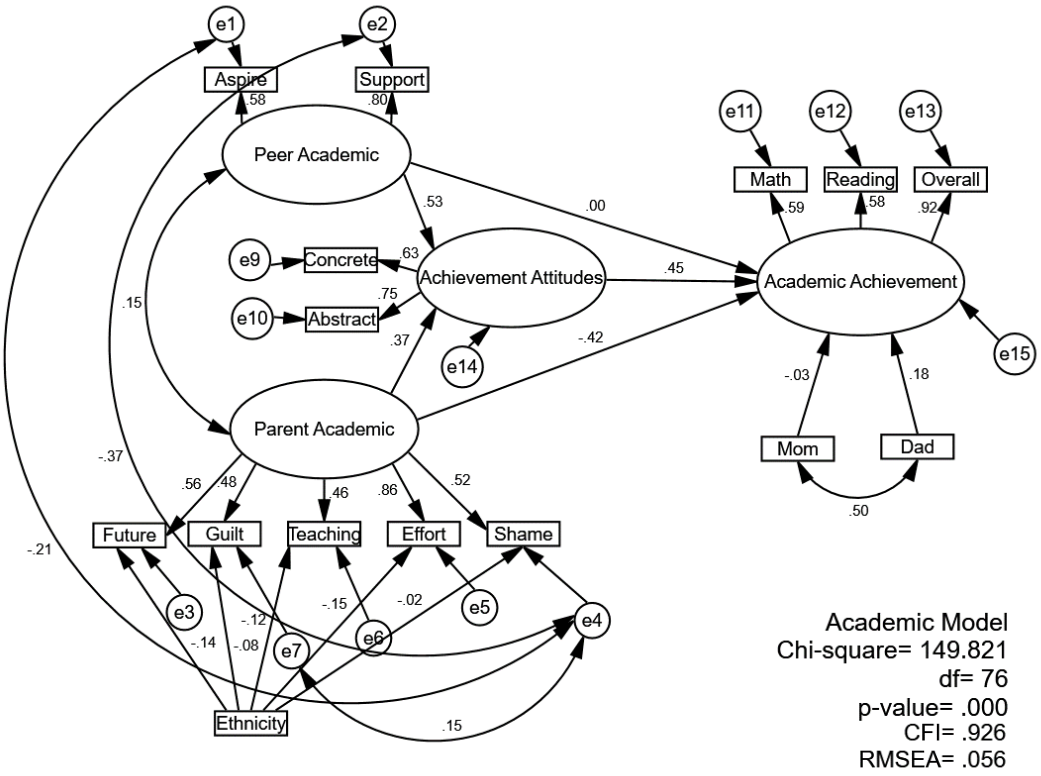

Figure 10. Structural model of the academic model of achievement with standardized path estimates. Latent variables are represented by ovals, with their measured indicator variables represented by rectangles.

RQ 4b: Does parent academic socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement outcomes?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that the path from parent academic socialization to academic achievement would be significantly positive. The academic model of achievement was used for this research question. This hypothesis was tested by determining whether the parent academic socialization to academic achievement path significantly differed from zero. Consistent with

the unstandardized estimates found in Table 6, parent socialization had a significantly negative influence on academic achievement (standardized estimate= -0.42, $p<.001$). Based on the results of this analysis, the hypothesis was partially supported.

Table 7

Unstandardized Indirect Effects of Predictor Variables on Academic Achievement and Corresponding p-values for Each Model

	Model Outcome Variables		
Predictor variable	Academic Achievement	*p*	90% CI
Academic Model			
Peer Academic Socialization	.24	.002	[.14, .73]
Parent Academic Socialization	.33	.002	[.09, .51]
Racial Model			
Peer Racial Socialization	-.07	.012	[-.16, -.02]
Parent Racial Socialization	.06	.007	[.02, .12]
Combined Model			
Racial Socialization[a]	-.01	.001	[-.01, -.00]
Academic Socialization	-.14	.001	[-.27, -.07]

Note. CI = Confidence Interval
[a]The exact upper bound of the confidence interval was -.002.

RQ 5a: Is the relationship between peer academic socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that achievement attitudes would mediate the relationship between peer academic socialization and academic achievement. Mediation was tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS and results can be found in Table 7. Standardized indirect effects were computed for each of 2,000 bootstrapped samples, and bias-corrected two-tailed significance was reported. A significant and positive indirect effect of peer academic socialization on academic achievement (standardized indirect effect= 0.24, $p < .05$) indicated that the hypothesis was fully supported.

RQ 5b: Is the relationship between parent academic socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that achievement attitudes would mediate the relationship between parent academic socialization and academic achievement. Mediation was tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS. A significant and positive indirect effect of parent academic socialization on academic achievement (standardized indirect effect= 0.17, $p < .05$)

demonstrated that the hypothesis was fully supported.

RQ 6a: Does peer racial socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that there would be a significantly positive relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement. The racial model of achievement was used for this research question. The hypothesis would be retained given a significant direct effect of peer racial socialization on academic achievement. A nonsignificant direct effect was

Figure 11. Results of the Racial Structural Model of Achievement

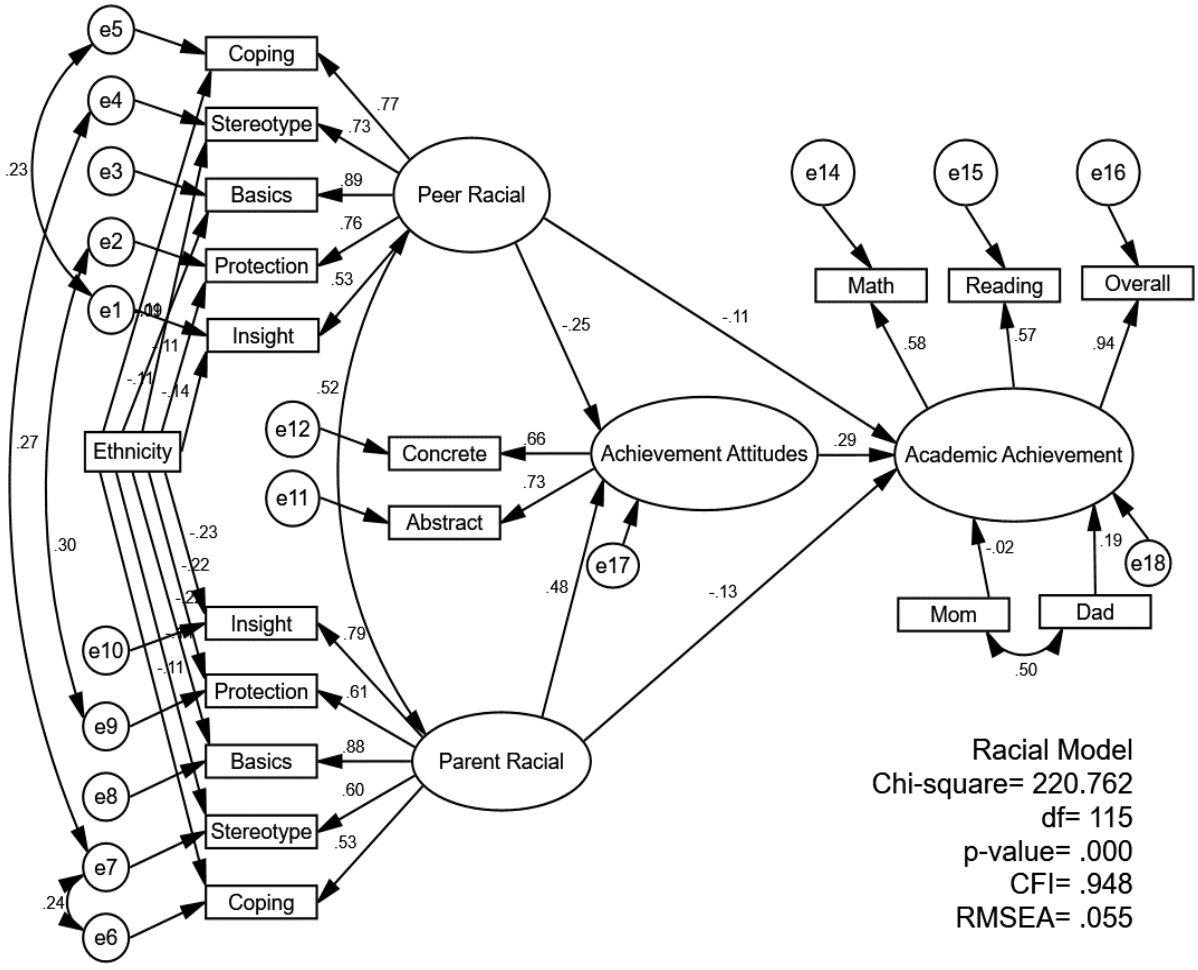

Figure 11. Structural model of the racial model of achievement with standardized path estimates. Latent variables are represented by ovals, with their measured indicator variables represented by rectangles.

found for peer racial socialization on academic achievement (standardized estimate= -.11, *p*=.156). Based on the results of this analysis, the hypothesis was not supported.

RQ 6b: Does parent racial socialization have a direct influence on academic achievement?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that there would be a significantly positive relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement. The racial model of achievement was used for this research question. The hypothesis would be supported given a significant direct effect of the parent racial socialization on academic achievement path. The results indicated a nonsignificant direct relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement (standardized estimate= -.13, *p*=.144). Based on the results of this analysis, the hypothesis was not supported.

RQ 7a: Is the relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that the relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement would be mediated by achievement attitudes. Mediation was tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS. A significant indirect effect of peer racial socialization on academic achievement would demonstrate support for the hypothesis. Results indicate that there is a significant and negative indirect relationship between peer racial socialization and academic achievement (standardized indirect effect= -.07, *p*<.05). Based on the results of this analysis, the hypothesis was fully supported.

RQ 7b: Is the relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement mediated by achievement attitudes?

Outcome: It was hypothesized that the relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement would be mediated by achievement attitudes. Mediation was tested using the bootstrapping method in AMOS. A significant indirect effect of parent racial socialization on academic achievement would indicate that the hypothesis is supported. The results demonstrated a significant and positive relationship between parent racial socialization and academic achievement (standardized indirect effect= .14, $p<.01$). Based on the results of this analysis, the hypothesis was fully supported.

Summary of Findings

The current study sought to evaluate model fit of three different models of academic achievement for Black youth, and to determine direct and indirect effects of parent and peer, racial and academic socialization on academic achievement. The results show that the three models all demonstrate good fit to the data, indicating that the hypothesized relationships between all latent variables exist and causal inferences might be supported. Overall, academic socialization and racial socialization both had strong correlations with at least one type of academic achievement (reading, math, overall), as demonstrated by Pearson correlations. A summary of direct and indirect effects that are used to summarize the results of the current study can be found in Table 8.

Parents. The results of this study show that parents have significant influence on Black youth's academic achievement, regardless of socialization type. All three models of achievement revealed significant direct and/or indirect effects of parents' socialization on achievement attitudes, and on academic achievement. For academic socialization, parent socialization had a significant and negative direct influence on academic achievement, suggesting that the more academic socialization youth receive from their parents, the lower their grades. However, the indirect effect of parental academic socialization on academic achievement through achievement attitudes was significant and

positive. Thus, the more academic socialization a youth receives from their parents results in an increase in achievement-related attitudes, which are positively related to academic achievement. The relationship between parental academic socialization and academic achievement was only partially mediated by achievement attitudes, suggesting that there are other variables not included in the model that may help explain the process through which academic socialization impacts achievement.

For racial socialization, parent socialization was not found to have a significant direct effect on academic achievement. However, a significant and positive indirect effect of parental racial socialization on academic achievement through achievement attitudes was found. This suggests that the impact of parent racial socialization on achievement is fully mediated by achievement attitudes. Specifically, the more a child is racially socialized by their parents, the more positive their achievement attitudes are, which is positively predictive of academic achievement. The results suggest that both academic and racial socialization have an impact on academic achievement for Black youth through achievement attitudes. A test was conducted to determine whether their impacts significantly differed from one another. Results suggest that academic socialization has a significantly greater impact on achievement attitudes than racial socialization.

Peers. In regard to peer influences on achievement, the results support that peers also play a role in the academic achievement of Black youth. However, neither model (academic or racial) supported a direct impact of peer socialization on academic achievement. For academic socialization, peer socialization had a significant and positive indirect effect on academic achievement through achievement attitudes. Specifically, the more peer academic socialization, the greater the achievement attitudes, which positively predicts academic achievement.

For racial socialization, a significant and negative indirect effect of peer racial socialization on academic achievement through achievement attitudes was found. In particular, the more Black youth are racially socialized by their peers, the lower their achievement attitudes, and achievement attitudes have a positive effect on academic achievement. Again, peer academic and racial socialization were both fully mediated by achievement attitudes, suggesting that achievement attitudes are an important mechanism through which peers influence academic outcomes.

Table 8

Standardized Direct & Indirect Effects with Academic Achievement as the Outcome Variable

Predictor variable	Direct Effects	Indirect Effect	Mediation
Academic Model			
Peer Academic Socialization	.01	.24*	Full
Parent Academic Socialization	-.42**	.17*	Partial
Racial Model			
Peer Racial Socialization	-.11	-.07*	Full
Parent Racial Socialization	-.06	.14**	Full
Combined Model			
Racial Socialization	0.15*	-.10**	Partial
Academic Socialization	0.24**	-.13**	Partial

*p<.05. **p<.01.

Chapter V: Discussion

Despite the wealth of research that documents the underachievement of Black youth, exploration of parent and peer influences on achievement is limited. A quick literature search of academic achievement for Black youth would paint the picture of a demographic of students who have been purported to not value education (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986), have a multitude of risk factors, and lag behind their other-race peers academically (U.S. Department of Education, 2013a, 2013b). Although some research has considered the role of parents and friends in fostering positive attitudes about education for Black youth (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Darensbourg & Blake, 2014; Suizzo et al., 2008), most other research on these variables utilize samples in which Black youth are either underrepresented or are not included. The purpose of the current study was to add to the existing but limited literature on Black youth's social support system, internal motivation towards education, and subsequent academic achievement. Specifically, three different models of academic achievement, containing variables related to racial and academic socialization, achievement attitudes, and academic grades, were tested.

Direct and indirect effects of parent and peer, racial and academic socialization on achievement attitudes and academic achievement were tested using the outcomes of specific models of achievement. Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that: (1) parents of Black youth are influential in their children's academic achievement, directly and indirectly through fostering positive attitudes about achievement, (2) academic and racial socialization have distinct and collective impacts on Black youth's academic achievement, (3) Black youth have relationships with peers who value education and influence their academic performance, (4) Black youth hold both abstract and concrete values towards education, and (5) ethnic differences in parent and peer socialization exist for Black youth.

Parental Influence on Academic Achievement

Parents have a unique and important role in shaping the development of their children. A notable contribution of this study is the finding of the positive influences that parents have on Black youth's education-related outcomes. Some research has suggested that parents of Black youth do not engage in socialization practices as often as parents of youth from other racial groups (Seyfriend & Chung, 2002). Consistent with previous research (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Suizzo et al., 2008), this study confirmed that parents of Black youth engage in both academic and racial socialization practices. Furthermore, these results suggest that race- and education- specific messages are predictive of Black youth's academic achievement. And, despite research that suggests that parental influence on academic outcomes is less significant as children enter middle school (Seyfried & Chung, 2002), this study has shown that parents of Black youth in secondary and post-secondary education are still able to have an impact on their child's academic success. Overall, these findings provide support that parents remain influential in their children's academic success across different developmental stages.

Consensus on the impact of parental racial and academic socialization on Black youth outcomes has not yet been achieved in the field. Differences in the ways in which researchers choose to operationalize racial and academic socialization may partially account for the lack of consistent research findings (Taylor & Roberts, 1995). Some researchers have posited that certain components of academic and racial socialization are more predictive of youth outcomes than the larger constructs. For example, scholars sometimes use preparation for bias—relaying messages to youth that they will likely experience discriminatory events—as the sole measure of racial socialization (Bentley et al., 2009). Relatedly, most research on parental socialization has focused on parent's physical involvement in their child's education (Taylor & Roberts, 1995). For this study, latent variables of both

socialization types were used, and support was found for all components of racial and academic socialization. This is an important contribution to the literature, because although not done intentionally, focusing on specific factors of these constructs reduces the number of ways parents can intervene and better support their child. Overall, the significance of *all* elements of both socializations provides renewed support for the use of racial and academic socialization.

Academic socialization. When included in a model of parent and peer academic socialization, parental socialization had a significant and negative direct relationship with academic achievement. This finding is consistent with other research that has found weak direct relationships between academic socialization and the academic achievement of Black youth (Seyfriend & Chung, 2002), but differs from research that suggests there is no direct relationship at all (Smalls & Cooper, 2010). However, as predicted, indirect effects of parental academic socialization on academic achievement through achievement attitudes were found, suggesting partial mediation. Specifically, findings demonstrated that parents' conversations with their child about their future career aspirations, pushing them to work harder in school, and punishing them for not performing well in school, are predictive of their child holding more positive attitudes towards education. These attitudes translate into better academic performance in school. The partially mediated relationship between parent academic socialization and youth achievement suggests that the relationship between parental academic socialization and academic achievement might have been oversimplified in the literature for Black youth. Furthermore, the negative relationship between parental academic socialization and youth achievement became positive with the inclusion of achievement attitudes. This suggests that increased importance needs to be placed on cultivating Black youth achievement attitudes. Additionally, there are likely other variables that mediate the relationship between parent academic socialization and

achievement, perhaps classroom-level factors (e.g., classroom engagement, teacher perceptions) or individual-level factors (e.g., academic identity), which should be explored in future research studies.

Previous research has suggested that parent's involvement in their children's education, including attending school functions and staying informed about school assignments, is positively predictive of their student's academic grades (Paulson, 1994). While these components of parental involvement were also included in the current study, additional parent-level factors were added to capture influences that are not contingent on parents' time or physical availability. This was thought to be an important addition given that parents of Black youth who have low socioeconomic resources are often unable to attend school functions due to job demands and single parent status (Herman & Yeh, 1983; Jeynes, 2001). The results demonstrated that when children report that they feel guilty about performing badly in school because their parents work hard, achievement attitudes increase, and subsequently so do their grades. This may indicate that the use of statements like, "get a good education so you don't have to work as hard as I do," or children seeing their parents work hard but still experience financial struggles, may increase their own education values. This demonstrates that parental academic socialization for Black youth is multifaceted, and suggests that parents do not have to be physically available to have a positive impact on their child's educational success.

Racial socialization. Consensus has not been obtained regarding the relationship between racial socialization and academic achievement for Black youth. While some research has found parent racial socialization to have a negative relationship with academic achievement (Marshall, 1995), others have found a positive (Neblett et al., 2006), and sometimes non-significant (Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Miller & McIntosh, 1999) relationship between these two constructs for Black youth. Many of the inconsistencies in findings can be attributed to how racial socialization is measured and defined across different studies (Bentley et al., 2009). The current study looked at racial socialization from parents as

a combination of many different components, and found it to not have a direct relationship to academic achievement when included in a model with peer racial socialization. However, parent racial socialization's prediction of academic achievement was fully mediated through achievement attitudes. Specifically, the findings suggest that the more parents teach their child the values and norms of their culture, ways to cope with potential racism, and how to survive in the mainstream culture, the greater the child's attitudes towards achievement, then academic achievement. This supports the speculation made by other researchers that perhaps the lack of research on racial socialization's relationship to academic achievement has led to a misunderstanding of its explanatory power (Allen, 2015; Bentley et al., 2009).

Racial socialization has been found to operate as a protective factor for Black youth (Cabrera, Beeghly & Eisenberg, 2012; Neblett et al., 2012). This study demonstrates that racial socialization helps Black youth in more ways than just buffering the negative consequences of racialized and discriminatory experiences. Black parents have been found to engage in racial socialization more than other racial groups (Coard & Sellers, 2005). Although racial socialization's contribution to research is important, clarification of its relationships to achievement was needed. With previous findings of components of racial socialization's negative (Marshall, 1995) and non-existent (McBride Murry et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2006) impact on academic achievement, concerns that parents of Black children may be inhibiting their children's success for the sake of safeguarding them from the negative effects of discrimination, naturally follow. This study dismisses the idea that parents relaying messages of racial socialization may hinder their children's academic success, and supports other findings that racial socialization leads to better academic expectations, aspirations, and attitudes for Black youth (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Suizzo et al., 2008).

Conversations about race and education. The transmission of *both* academic and racial socialization may be the best approach to supporting Black youth. This study found there to be a significant difference in the direct relationship between parent racial socialization and achievement attitudes versus parent academic socialization and achievement attitudes. As hypothesized, this study found that academic socialization has a more positive impact on achievement attitudes than racial socialization. It is likely that the relationship between academic socialization and achievement attitudes is stronger than racial socialization's relationship with achievement attitudes because on the information transmitted through academic socialization easily translates into valuing education due to the similarity of the content (i.e., both include overt messages of education's importance). Similarly, as parents talk to their children about the possibility of experiencing racism, and potentially being discriminated against (elements of racial socialization), the importance and utility of education may become blurred. To expound, if a child is told that they may potentially miss out on certain opportunities (e.g., job promotions, college acceptance, etc.) due to their race, the child may be less likely to see the actual benefit of academic success if, ultimately, they may still be overlooked for rewards for which they were equally qualified.

When both types of socialization were included in the same model, significant and positive direct effects were found between each socialization type and their impact on academic achievement. This was unique to the combined model, in that, when investigated in other models, parent academic socialization was negatively predictive of academic achievement, and racial socialization had no direct effect on achievement at all. The observation of significant direct effects in the presence of both socialization types calls to question the impact of an interaction of both socialization types on achievement, and confirms research on the additive benefits of both socialization practices (Allen, 2015; Cooper & Smalls, 2010; Suizzo, et al., 2008). It is likely that Black children benefit most from

conversations about the realities of potentially being discriminated against, and tools to navigate mainstream culture, coupled with constant reminders that it is still important to achieve and have high career aspirations. It is likely that many Black parents do not talk about education-related topics without mentioning race. For example, statements like "Black children will learn more if they go to a mostly White school" (an item from the CARES measure used in this study), and its converse are not occurring in isolation. These statements may grow into a full discussion on school resource discrepancies between Black majority and White majority schools. This study suggests that the inclusion of racial and academic socialization may lead to even better academic outcomes for Black youth, and that further investigation of their combined relationship with achievement attitudes and academic achievement is warranted.

Peer Influence on Academic Achievement

As youth get older and enter adolescence, more importance is often placed on their peer interactions as opposed to their parents (Coleman, 1961; Hallinan & Williams, 1990; Bentley-Edwards & Adams, 2013). Unfortunately, very little is known about Black youth's peer relationships and their influence on academic outcomes. To the author's knowledge, this is the first study to examine the impact of peer-sourced academic and racial socialization on Black youth's academic achievement. This is an important contribution to the literature because previous research has generally highlighted findings of peers having a negative influence on Black youth outcomes. Overall, Black youth have been reported to have peers who place less emphasis on education (Steinberg, 1996), to be more sensitive to negative peer influence (Steinberg et a., 1992), and to admire peers that do not succeed academically (Graham et al., 1998). The findings of the current study add contrasting evidence that Black youth have peers who are academically supportive and have high aspirations. Furthermore, although no direct relationship between peer racial or academic socialization with academic

achievement was found, significant indirect effects through achievement attitudes for each socialization type exist. This suggests that the peer relationships of Black youth are potentially another area of support.

A significantly positive, full mediation was found between peer academic socialization and academic achievement. This finding is in stark contrast to findings that suggest that peers of Black youth devalue the academic success of their peers (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu & Simmons, 1998). Previous studies have posited that involuntary minorities, those who were unwillingly brought to the United States of America for slavery or colonialism, develop what has been termed an Oppositional Identity. This identity is purportedly one that is in stark contrast of the values, ideals, and tenets of White culture. One way in which Oppositional Identity has been utilized in the research is to suggest that Black youth's underachievement is related to establishing an identity that devalues education as a way to protect them from being accused of "Acting White". Ultimately, these constructs subsume that Black people devalue education and, in particular, Black youth actively deidentify with academic achievement to "protect" their Blackness. However, based on the findings in this study, peers of Black youth engage in positive academic socialization and are influential in cultivating positive attitudes about academic achievement. This is consistent with research that found peer group engagement to be predictive of youth's academic motivation (Kinderman, 2007). As Black youth's peers set higher academic aspirations, and support their friends by forming study groups and holding each other accountable, their own attitudes towards the utility and benefits of education become more positive. These positive attitudes about education, eventually translates into better academic grades. To this end, friendship groups with high-aspiring peers should be encouraged for Black youth.

In regard to racial socialization, peer-sourced messages had a significant indirect effect on academic achievement. Although it was hypothesized that peer racial socialization would be positively

predictive of achievement attitudes, a negative relationship was found. This is a startling finding, given that culture-specific coping mechanisms have been found to be beneficial to Black youth (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Neblett et al., 2012; Nobles, 1986). However, based on the outcomes of this study, Black youth's socialization mostly consists of ways to cope with racism, and stereotypical appraisals of what it means to be Black. Given the developmental stages of the youth included in this study, it is understandable that their understanding of their race is largely stereotypical, as it is heavily influenced by media depictions. It is likely that middle and high school-aged Black youth lack the insight necessary to go beyond shallow discussions about race. Without being able to talk about racism and stereotypes and how they actually operate in the larger society (skills potentially acquired through experience and age), youth may believe that it is futile to try to overcome these negative racialized experiences. As parents socialize their youth, they are likely providing more context than peers are able to offer. Also, unlike racial socialization occurring with their parents, peer conversations may not include topics of achievement or education; this may account for the negative relationship between peer-sourced racial socialization and academic achievement. Therefore, instead of discouraging youth from having conversations about race with their friends, it will be important for parents to continually check-in with their children about the conversations they are having with their friends. Parents should consider taking these conversations a step further by including topics of resilience, and clarifying any misinformation that is being shared among peers.

Achievement Attitudes of Black Youth

The findings in this dissertation add renewed importance for the study of achievement attitudes of Black youth, and debunks previous claims that Black youth do not value education (Taylor & Graham, 2007). A latent variable of achievement attitudes, that consisted of abstract and concrete task values, was found to be positively predictive of academic achievement. Based on the results of her

research on academic motivation in youth, Mickelson (1990) purported that abstract task values, beliefs that education will lead to success, are not predictive of academic success for Black youth. Relatedly, she found that concrete task values were actual predictors of academic achievement for Black youth. Her findings became fixtures in the literature, and researchers have often focused on the relationships between concrete task values and academic achievement for Black youth (Darensbourg & Blake, 2013; Meece, Wigfield, Eccles, 1990; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Concrete values are different from abstract task values, in that concrete values are shaped by the youth's exposure to other people's acquired success being attributed to their educational attainment. Based on the idea of concrete task values, if Black youth are exposed to individuals who have attained occupational success without completing post-secondary education, youth are less likely to believe that education is necessary to succeed professionally. Given the results of this dissertation, Black youth were found to hold high abstract *and* concrete task values, and both were predictive of academic achievement. Furthermore, abstract task values were significantly and positively correlated with Black youth's overall grades, whereas, concrete task values were not. The omission of investigating abstract task values may have resulted in an oversimplified view of Black youth's attitudes toward education, and potentially missed opportunities for interventions. It will be important that future researchers consider the use of abstract and concrete task values when evaluating the achievement attitudes of Black youth to truly capture their internal motivation.

Academic self-concept. Initially, the design of the achievement attitudes latent variable was constructed to capture Black youth's abstract task values (i.e., educational goals), concrete task values (i.e., benefits of education), and academic self-concept (i.e., academic self-perception). Instead, items reflecting youth's educational goals and academic self-perception were combined into a joint measure of abstract attitudes. The inclusion of academic self-concept as a separate indicator variable would

have allowed a deeper understanding of motivational factors for Black youth achievement. Unfortunately, the instrument used to measure student's academic self-concept and goals, School Attitude Assessment-Revised (SAAR; McCoach & Siegle, 2013), had an excessively high correlation between subscales, and lacked variance in participant responses. It appears that this particular measure of student's attitudes towards school may only represent one construct for Black youth. These two subscales of academic self-concept and academic goals are highly related, and as such researchers commonly refer to the combination of these constructs as academic identity (Welch & Hodges, 1997). Based on the outcomes of the responses on the SAAR, Black youth think highly of their academic abilities and have goals that are aligned with this high regard of their abilities. It is unclear whether these findings are consistent with research that has found high beliefs of academic abilities to translate into academic success (Cokley, McClain, Jones, & Johnson, 2012), or if the results are supportive of research suggesting that academic self-concept is not related to academic outcomes due to Black youth overestimating their actual abilities (Farkas, Lleras, & Maczuga, 2002; Solorzano, 1991). Academic self-concept, goals, and identity and how they relate to the academic outcomes of Black youth is still an area of research that requires more inquiry. However, given the psychometrics of the measure found in this study, future researchers should take caution when attempting to utilize the subscales of the SAAR with a sample of Black youth.

Overall, achievement attitudes were a consistent positive predictor of academic achievement for the racial and academic models, and the measured variables of abstract and concrete values had positive relationships with reading, math and overall grades. This indicates that for Black youth, having positive views that an education will lead to better success in the future leads to better academic outcomes. On the other hand, when looking at the model that included both forms of parent-sourced socialization, higher achievement attitudes were predictive of a decrease in academic

performance. This suggests that the combined effect of academic and racial socialization may alter the relationship between achievement attitudes and grades. Future research should consider interaction effects of racial and academic achievement for Black youth and its impact on grades.

The Role of Ethnicity

Although not the focus of the current study, differences between Black youth who identify as African American and Multiracial were found. Specifically, the results of this study revealed that Multiracial youth receive less parental and peer racial socialization, and less academic socialization than African American adolescents. Groups were not large enough to compare differences in model fit for each group; however, there are likely many reasons why these differences in outcomes were found. As it pertains to parental influences, Rollins and Hunter (2013) found that Black mothers of Biracial youth are more likely to provide self-development racial socialization—a type of racial socialization that encourages their child's individual development as opposed to transmitting messages of solidarity and racial group membership. Furthermore, mothers of Biracial youth who did not have Black heritage tended to not engage in overt racial socialization at all, and rather remained silent to avoid having to broach topics of discrimination and prejudice with their child (Rollins & Hunter, 2013).

This study also found that Multiracial youth are not engaging in racial socialization with peers as frequently as other Black youth in this study reported. Research suggests that the racial make-up of multiracial youth's friendships is largely contingent on the composition of their own races (Doyle & Kao, 2007). Doyle and Kao (2007) investigated the friendship choices of a sample of multiracial youth using the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health data. Findings suggest that non-White multiracial youth tend to have friend groups that consist mostly of Black youth (e.g., a Black-Latino Biracial youth would have Black friends), and White multiracial youth often have primarily White friendships (e.g., an Asian-White Biracial child would have primarily White friendships). However,

findings further suggest that Black-White and Black-Asian multiracial youth have significantly less Black friends than monoracial Black youth. This is an important distinction because racial socialization is more likely to occur between Black peers. If multiracial youth have peer groups that are mostly comprised of non-Black adolescents, they are probably less likely to engage in these socialization practices. These findings further support the need for more research on Black youth exclusively, so that social support differences between Black ethnic groups can be better understood.

Study Limitations

The current study will add to the existing and still growing research of academic and racial socialization messages, and how they influence Black youth outcomes. Furthermore, findings may help increase research that looks at the unique influence of peers and parents on academic outcomes, and further promote the exploration of protective factors for Black youth. As a result of this study, parents and peers have been found to be important sources of influence on Black youth achievement through increases of achievement attitudes. Furthermore, renewed support for assessing both abstract and concrete task values of education was established, in that, Black youth were found to value education using both types of attitudes. The important contributions of this study should be considered with certain limitations in mind. In particular, the study does not account for developmental differences, relies completely on a single-informant's self-report, and does not include tests of alternate models.

Results of this study are based on a population of Black youth who are high school and college-aged. Given the equal sample size for these developmental groups, and the need for a large total sample size, both developmental groups were used for analyses in this study. However, investigation of differences across different developmental periods was not the focus of the current study. However, it is always important to consider the role that development plays in youth's decision-

making, identity, and achievement (Blake, Smith, & Darenbourg, 2016; Spencer & Swanson, 2013). This study assessed youth's attitudes towards education, and susceptibility to peer and parent influence. An evaluation of developmental differences may have revealed some of the shifts in key influential supports, that have been noted in the literature (Bates, 2004; Bentley-Edwards & Adams, 2013). Furthermore, it is likely that the variability in developmental level affected the measures of racial socialization in this study. In particular, parents may utilize different racial socialization practices at different stages in their children's' lives, and peers at earlier developmental stages may have more shallow conversations about race. By not restricting the sample to a more narrow age, these results may not provide a realistic depiction of experiences of racial socialization and the impact on achievement motivation and outcomes.

Self-report measures are a commonly used data collection technique for psychological research. For this study, information obtained about parent and peer socialization was collected from the study participant and not the sources of those messages. It cannot be assumed that the endorsement of items truly captures socialization practices. It could be the case that what is actually being measured is youth's perceptions of socialization messages, and not an accurate account of what messages are being communicated. For example, research has found there to not be significant correlations between a parent's account of their involvement, and their children's report (Paulson, 1994). To this end, future research should consider using both participant-reported, and parent and peer-reported measures of socialization and evaluate whether there are discrepancies between the source and the recipient of socialization.

Another important limitation to consider is the lack of tests of alternate models, in which the order of the variables is changed. Because this study was based on the combination of the Expectancy-Value Theory and PVEST frameworks, the order and inclusion of variables were informed by the

processes through which these theories speculated. However, without testing these potentially equivalent or better-fitting models, it cannot be definitively asserted that the causal conclusions of this study truly exist. For example, perhaps instead of achievement attitudes predicting academic achievement, better academic performance was predictive of higher achievement attitudes of valuing education. Therefore, the findings of this study should be interpreted within the context of all of these noted limitations.

Implications for Research and Practice

The findings in this study add to the literature of protective factors for Black youth. Specifically, I have found that social supports, conversations about race and education, and the presence of both concrete and abstract attitudes about education are all important to the academic success of Black students. Given this renewed support for existing protective factors, and the discovery of new factors (i.e., peer academic socialization), stakeholders are encouraged to utilize these findings in the development of school- and community-based interventions for Black youth. Furthermore, researchers are charged to incorporate these findings in their research on Black youth achievement by taking the recommended next steps in the research of protective factors related to the academic success of Black youth. Specific implications for practice and research follow.

Fostering Black youth achievement. "It takes a village to raise a child" is a popular African proverb that highlights the use of a collaborative approach towards supporting Black children. It is time for the metaphorical village consisting of Black youth's parents, peers, schools, and communities to all work towards promoting positive academic outcomes for these children. Parents should be encouraged to continue having conversations with their children about race including: messages of how to cope with racism, traditional and even stereotypical appraisals of being Black, and how to navigate the mainstream culture. These conversations were found to be important in fostering Black

youth's achievement in the current study, and, have historically been shown to buffer the negative impact of perceived discrimination on mental health (Fischer & Shaw, 1999) and on Black youth's self-esteem (Harris-Britt, Valrie, Kurtz-Costes, and Rowley, 2007). Given the positive academic and psychosocial impact that racial socialization has on Black youth, it should continue to be considered an important protective factor throughout all stages of development (Cabrera et al., 2013; Neblett et al., 2012). Practically, these socialization practices may include parents initiating conversations about race and any new experiences their child may have had during school during dinnertime discussions. These conversations may also involve parents providing honest answers to their children's questions regarding racial norms, events occurring in the nation, or everyday interactions with other-race youth. With a shift towards people desiring to take a more color-blind approach to issues of race, parents may be hesitant to have these conversations. However, this study shows that Black youth are engaging in these discussion with their peers, so it behooves parents to provide their perspective and monitor the messages that their child may be receiving.

Parental academic socialization not only had a positive direct and indirect relationship to academic achievement, but also was found to have a stronger impact on achievement attitudes than racial socialization in this study. Schools and parents must continue to use education-specific conversations and involvement to motivate Black youth to do well in school. This is particularly important because, despite previous research that has suggested that parents' influence on their youth's achievement diminishes as they enter middle school (Seyfried & Chung, 2002), this study found that even college-aged students still benefit academically from parental involvement and support. Parents should continue to talk to their children about their child's future career aspirations, how proud their child's academic success makes them, as well as engage in assisting their child with their schoolwork and emphasize the importance of giving their best effort in school assignments. These conversations

will likely lead to an increase in their child's attitudes about education and may result in better performance academically. Furthermore, academic socialization from parents, coupled with racial socialization messages, may result in even better academic outcomes. Thus, parents are encouraged to incorporate conversations about the importance of doing well in school while talking about inequities that exist between racial groups, for instance.

Helping Black students in the school. According to statistics from Pew Research Center (2014), students attending traditional high schools in America spend approximately 1,025 hours per year in school. Therefore, children are probably spending most of their time outside of the home at school. This makes schools important places where positive peer relationships and attitudes towards education may be fostered. Administrators, counselors, and teachers should consider ways in which they can promote positive abstract and concrete values for schools. This may be done by reiterating the practical utility of information that students are learning in the classroom, as this will likely translate into more concrete values of education. Also, bringing in successful individuals who can attest to the practicality of the material that students are currently learning, and can speak on their personal experiences of education helping them reach their current success may counter some of the negative concrete attitudes towards education that other researchers have found to be held by Black youth (Mickelson, 1990). In terms of fostering abstract attitudes, school personnel should consider ways to boost Black youth's academic self-concept and educational goals. This may include teachers incorporating projects that require students to think about their future aspirations and create a plan to accomplish them. Additionally, providing positive feedback specific to the student's academic abilities may continue to build their confidence in their academic skills.

School counselors should consider incorporating group conversations about members' attitudes toward education and future aspirations during any social skills or process group sessions. This will

not only provide the youth with the opportunity to engage in peer academic socialization, but may also foster youths' abstract attitudes towards education, including their own academic goals and aspirations. Lastly, schools should consider in what ways they can continue to build home and school collaborations, and utilize these study findings to educate and empower parents of Black youth to engage in both academic and racial socialization practices. This is an important consideration for schools, because parents of Black youth, particularly those from low socioeconomic status or limited education, may have less self-efficacy in regard to their ability to help their children (Desimone, 1999; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992. Furthermore, parents who did not complete high school or attend post-secondary education institutions may have the desire to assist their children with homework and encourage them to do better in school than they did, but, may not know exactly *how* to do so. School personnel may be able to reassure parents and provide them with tools to support their students.

Although the findings of this study reveal a number of opportunities in which school personnel have to make substantial impact on the academic and racial socialization of Black youth, the recommendations provided so far are not simple fixes. Asking schools to go towards topics of race will require school administrators and teachers to become comfortable having these conversations. It is recommended that any efforts towards the goal of providing race-specific socialization and academic interventions be done with notable planning, ensuring that administrators, counselors and teachers feel well-equipped to facilitate these discussions. It is likely that a more diverse staff of administrators and teachers, especially in a school with a diverse student population, will help increase the quality of the conversations about race and may help students feel more comfortable, safe and supported as interventions are implemented (Downey & Pribesh, 2004; Grissom & Redding, 2016).

Community-based interventions. Structured community interventions are a helpful adjunct to home and school support structures, and Black students who participate in such programs typically have higher grades and better attendance in school (Afterschool Alliance, 2013). There are many successful cultural interventions that are used to promote prosocial outcomes for Black youth (e.g., *Sisters of Nia*; Belgrave, Cherry, Butler, & Townsend, 2009). Although facilitators of these programs often engage in forms of racial socialization and help promote healthy self-esteem and adjustment (Belgrave, Reed, Plybon, Butler, Allison, and Davis, 2004), they often lack academic components. Furthermore, there is a dearth of successful academic interventions for Black youth considering the need for such programs and the wealth of programs geared towards improving the social, behavioral, and physical health of Black youth (Brandy & Moore, 2011). The findings of the current study found that although racial socialization from parents had positive impact on academic achievement, peer-sourced socialization had a negative relationship with academic achievement. Given that many of these intervention groups have peer components, it is likely that these conversations about race among peers alone are not helping academic progress. However, interventionists should include adding academic components to these cultural programs, and perhaps introduce the youth to community leaders or other successful adults who can speak to education's impact on their professional success and attainment. Furthermore, since peer groups within the community programs already exist, consider: adding curriculum that is focused on achievement-related development, highlighting famous high-achieving Black individuals, take trips to colleges, inquire about the students' career goals, facilitate peer study groups, and encourage the students to continue conversations about education outside of the structured sessions.

Research on Black Youth Achievement. Research on Black youth achievement should consider expanding the findings of this current study to learn more about the relationships among

variables in the models. In particular, scholars should consider (1) potential interactions between racial and academic socialization from peers and parents, (2) investigating other mediators of socialization and achievement, (3) and moderators of the relationship between achievement attitudes and academic success.

This study redefined the importance that parents have on children during their adolescent years. Researchers have previously purported that as children get older, parents have less of an influence on their student's achievement and peers become more influential (Bentley et al., 2009). In order to better understand the differential impact of peers and parents on achievement for Black youth, researchers should consider testing for effects of an interaction of both socialization types. Furthermore, comparisons between the impact of academic and racial socialization on achievement attitudes in this study found that parent academic socialization is more predictive of positive attitudes. Future research should investigate whether a combination of academic and racial socialization is significantly more predictive of positive attitudes than either socialization type alone. The relationship between parent academic socialization and academic achievement was only partially mediated by achievement attitudes. This suggests that there may be other mechanisms through which parent academic socialization operates to predict their children's academic achievement. Other researchers have found that parent academic socialization informs academic achievement through parental academic expectations and motivation (Hill & Tyson, 1999a; Howard, 2003), others have found behavioral engagement to be an important addition to the predictive effects between parental involvement, achievement attitudes and academic achievement (Darensbourg & Blake, 2013). Perhaps including achievement attitudes with these other potential mediators would result in even greater influences on academic achievement. This study found that achievement attitudes were a positive predictor of academic achievement in all models except for the model that combined parent racial and

academic socialization types. For this model, achievement attitudes were a negative predictor of academic achievement. Given this change in the nature of the relationship between achievement attitudes and academic success, it is likely that an investigation of behavioral variables, such as classroom behavioral engagement or school/academic involvement, and their interaction with achievement attitudes would clarify the relationship between attitudes and outcomes.

Conclusion

Deficit-based frameworks of research on Black youth have permeated through the field in regard to academic achievement (McLloyd, 1990). This has taken the form of comparative research study designs, focusing on risk rather than resilience, and overlooking potential protective factors in the form of social support. The field has been shifting for a while, and is now challenging researchers to take a more strengths-based approach to studying the outcomes of ethnic minority youth (Blake, Smith, & Darensbourg, 2016). The current study sought to shift the focus from risk to resilience, and to identify how Black youth's parents and peers can be used to facilitate better academic outcomes for these youth. Specifically, parental and peer influences in the form of racial and academic socialization on Black youth's academic outcomes were investigated. Findings support that racial and academic socialization practices have positive impacts on Black youth achievement, and that both parents and peers play an important role in fostering their academic success.

By researching Black youth in isolation, key protective factors were able to emerge without engaging in comparative research. Based on the findings of this study, parents should be encouraged to have conversations with their children about career aspirations, regularly check-in with their child about how they are progressing in school, and ask about ways that their parent can be supportive. This extra effort on the parents' end may help their child experience academic progress. Furthermore, parents should continue to monitor the relationships that their children have with their peers. This

study supports that when Black youth have friends that have high educational aspirations and study together, they eventually perform well in school. Schools and interventionists can also help Black youth achieve success by creating opportunities for youth to build relationships with other adolescents who value school and aspire to be academically successful.

The results of this study should be a refreshing reminder that despite previous research that has characterized Black youth's parents and peers as not being positive influences on their achievement (Deater-Deakard et al., 1996; Graham et al., 1998; Steinberg et al., 1992), these social supports have a unique place in the development of Black youth. Current events in the nation have caused Black youth to become the focus of positive and negative attention in the media. With youth's accessibility to news sources, articles, and social media, parents may be finding themselves having to broach the topic of racial tension in America sooner than they anticipated. Furthermore, given the frequency in which these events are occurring, conversations about race between parents and their Black children are likely happening quite regularly. The social benefits of these conversations are well documented; and, this study suggests that Black youth can also benefit *academically* from racial socialization practices. Furthermore, findings suggest that Black youth benefit most from a combination of conversations about racial and academic socialization. It is likely that conversations parents are having with their children about race already include subtle messages that stress putting effort into their academic work (e.g., "you must work twice as hard to get as far as other races"). However, parents of Black youth should consider adding even more academic socialization. These conversations about race and education that parents of Black youth are having with their children may not only be protecting their children from harm, and helping them develop healthy self-concepts, but are also helping prepare them for educational success.

This dissertation began with a quote from Marian Wright Edelman indicating that "Education is a precondition to survival in America today." This study has demonstrated that despite educational disparities and the opportunity gap between Black youth and their White counterparts, positive outcomes can be obtained. These outcomes utilize the direct support of Black youth's parents and peers, and the larger support of their schools and communities. Therefore, if education is truly the precondition to survival in America, "the village" might be the precondition for academic achievement.

Appendix A

Table 9

Unstandardized Direct Effects and Corresponding p-values for Each Model

	Model Outcome Variable			
Predictor	Achievement Attitudes	*p*	Academic Achievement	*p*
Academic Model				
Peer Academic Socialization	1.78	<.001	.01	.965
Parent Academic Socialization	1.28	<.001	-.59	.001
Achievement Attitudes	-	-	.18	.001
Racial Model				
Peer Racial Socialization	-.15	.007	-.11	.156
Parent Racial Socialization	.13	<.001	-.06	.144
Achievement Attitudes	-	-	.48	.002
Combined Model				
Racial Socialization	.01	<.001	.01	.018
Academic Socialization	.20	<.001	.26	.001
Achievement Attitudes	-	-	-.69	<.001

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